Carsten Peter Thiede

We in Europe

Roots

Roads

Perspectives

Press- and
Information Office of
the Federal Government

Press- and
Information Office of
the Federal Government

The Author:

Carsten Peter Thiede (b. 1952) is an historian and papyrologist. He studied at the universities of Berlin, Geneva and Oxford, was a lecturer at the University of Geneva and is Life Member of the Institute of Germanic Studies, University of London. He is a member of the board of the German Institute for Education and Knowledge, Paderborn. He and his English wife have three children who grow up bilingually.

Carsten Peter Thiede

We in Europe

Roots
Roads
Perspectives

Contents

Introduction
Page 6

CHAPTER I.
The Bull and the Virgin: Origins on a Holiday Island
Page 10

The Myth of Europe
Page 12

Europe – Where is it?
Page 16

CHAPTER II.
The Roman Empire: An Empire of many Cultures
Page 22

Frontiers disappear
Page 24

Travel educates: Languages, Religions and Cultures
Page 30

CHAPTER III.
Sunrise in the West: A Division which unifies
Page 38

West, East and a Reflection on the Essentials
Page 40

Rules and Regulations, and Lots of Common Sense
Page 48

CHAPTER IV.
The Youth of the Middle Ages and the First Europe: Links with new horizons
Page 54

A Triangle as the Squaring of the Circle? Aachen, Magdeburg and Rome
Page 56

Learning from each other: A Black Patron Saint and Greek Masterbuilders
Page 66

CHAPTER V.
Europe exports itself: Crusades and Colonies
Page 72

Light and Shade in Jerusalem
Page 74

Columbus and Bartolomé de las Casas, or: The Roots of Human Rights.
Page 80

CHAPTER VI.
The first Universities: Italy leads the Way
Page 88

The Renaissance of the Educational System, or Elites without Elitism
Page 90

Science and Faith – an old Theme is Europeanized
Page 98

CAPTER VII.
Thoughts are free: Reformation and Enlightenment
Page 100

Europe between Power and Faith
Page 102

Unity in Diversity? The Period of Bridge-Builders
Page 112

CHAPTER VIII.
Yearning for Europe: Beginnings of the Modern Age
Page 120

The Industrial Society and the Social Reformers, Hopes and Conflicts
Page 123

From Crisis into Wars: the Dream of National Supremacy becomes a Nightmare
Page 134

CHAPTER IX.
The Future of Freedom: Human Rights and Human Responsibilities
Page 140

Guilt and Atonement, Beginnings and Achievements
Page 142

We are Europe – for us, for others
Page 148

Appendices **Page 163**

"Europe, and this repeated often eno place, but an idea" cannot be ugh, is not a

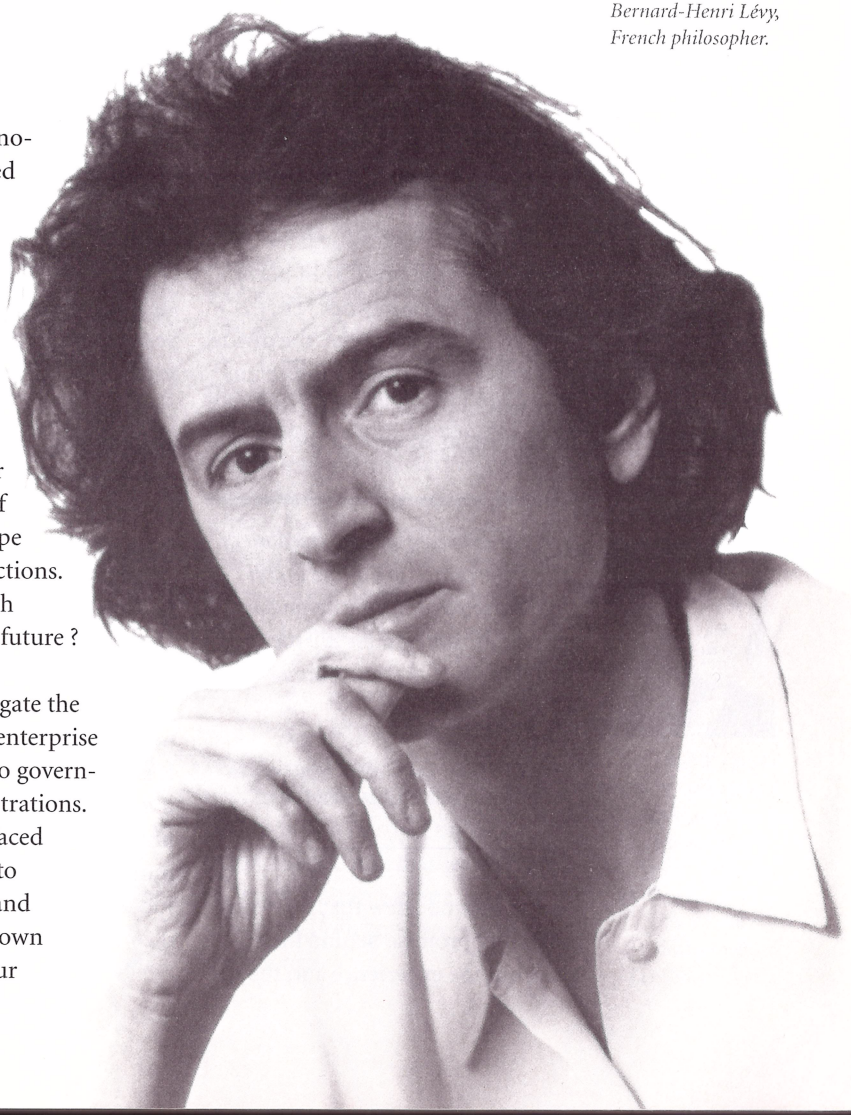
– these are the words of the French cultural philosopher Bernard-Henri Lévy. He published them in the French journal 'Le Point', in early 1995, and he added, on a more philosophical note: "It is a category not of being, but of the spirit." Indeed, the question of what Europe really is – and, above all perhaps, what it could become, has occupied the minds of people on this continent time and again. What is Europe, and where is it going ?

More often than not, it is everyday experience which arouses our curiosity. Since 1995, there has been the ideal of a Community without borders and customs controls – but not all members of the European Community have signed the treaty and act accordingly. For more than fifty years there has been peace between the enemies of the Second World War, and yet, a bloody war and genocide have devastated former Yugoslavia, with NATO forces still out there, trying to preserve peace. Hope, gratitude for the many things that have already been achieved, grief over continuous signs of tragic failure: Europe lives with contradictions. But can it grow with them, into a better future ?

We cannot delegate the necessary spirit of enterprise and commitment to governments and administrations. Every one of us is faced with the challenge to participate, create and cooperate – in our own spheres of life, at our

"The awareness of common origins and the will to have a common future – both are prerequisites for the inner unity of our fatherland and for the unification of Europe. Europe and nation – this is no contradiction."

HELMUT KOHL, CHANCELLOR OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, POLICY STATEMENT, 23 NOVEMBER 1994



Bernard-Henri Lévy, French philosopher.

John Donne, British poet and theologian (1572–1631).

places of work, and wherever we may be able to exert influence. The English poet John Donne put this into words, more than three hundred years ago: "No man is an island," he wrote in 1624, "entire of itself. Every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or of thine own were."

This concept of belonging, of the togetherness of people and countries in Europe was expressed at the time of a terrible, murderous conflict, the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). Were those lines by John Donne the product of naive optimism ? Certainly not. They were an appeal to remove the divide, and to strengthen everyone's commitment to peace, freedom and human rights in view of the horrors of war. Donne knew that there was no empty promise behind his appeal, but the experience and the insights of a more than two-thousand year old history. This still holds true today: The riches of a colourful, varied, captivating European history are anything but a cumbersome burden on our way into the future; they are an important incentive. A former Polish foreign secretary, Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, summed it up thus: "Europe, this means above all the freedom of the individual, it means human rights, political as much as economical. This is a democratic order, borne by all citizens. It is the constitutional state. And at the same time, it is the reflection upon the fate of mankind and moral order, which stems from our Judaeo-Christian traditions and the incomparable beauty of culture."

"It took a long time for Europe to grow together to the extent which we take for granted today. Countless wars and their cruel consequences have paved the way, and often it seemed as though European culture had been lost. Particularly in view of this past and in recognition of the great Europeans of past times, we must not cease to press on with the growing together of our continent so as to safeguard peaceful coexistence of European peoples."

SWENJA SURMINSKI, BORN 1975, IN 'YOUTH BUILDS EUROPE 2000', RHEINISCHER MERKUR, 13 JANUARY 1995

Sophie Scholl (1921–1943): Leading member of the German anti-Nazi resistance movement "White Rose", guillotined on 22 February 1943.

"Freedom of speech, freedom of belief, the protection of the individual citizen against the despotism of tyrannic states, these are the foundations of the new Europe."

EXCERPT FROM LEAFLET NO. 5 OF THE ANTI-NAZI RESISTANCE MOVEMENT "THE WHITE ROSE", JANUARY 1943

"Europe is a community of peace, a community of freedom, a community of democracies, a community of economies, a community of stability, a community of security. All these communities stand on the foundations of a common spiritual and intellectual heritage. And yet, they do not fall into our lap by themselves. They resemble unfinished cathedrals on which one has to work incessantly."

ROMAN HERZOG, PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, SPEECH AT THE FORUM 'ZUKUNFT FÜR EUROPA' (FUTURE FOR EUROPE) IN BERLIN, 7 NOVEMBER 1996

Christine Lieberknecht, the young Minister for Federal Affairs in the German federal state of Thuringia and one of those courageous politicians who personify a new democratic beginning at the end of communist East Germany, and who make a constructive contribution to the role of a reunited Germany in the heart of Europe, recently called for a new European awareness of our origins. She called upon us all to "make sure that the sources will not dry up, the sources from which is fed the true strength of European thinking: the never flagging intellectual vividness and energy, the interest in controversy, the capability to recognize problems, to describe and to solve them rationally." She stood in the tradition of the Spanish writer Salvador de Madariaga who, in his "Portrait of Europe" in 1952, wrote: "Let us create a Europe which is both Socratic and Christian, both full of doubt and full of faith, full of freedom and order, full of diversity and unity."

Such a Europe would fulfill our endeavours to safeguard the achievements of the post-war era: peace and freedom must be guaranteed, and other tasks can only be tackled on a European and a global scale – the environment cannot be protected by one country alone, the fight against terrorism and crime demands the concerted action of partners. It is therefore all the more noteworthy that further countries, particularly from Central and Eastern Europe, intend to join the European Union.

Images, quotes, sources, reviews and previews have been brought together in this book as a contribution to a better understanding of our common Europe, the one that exists and the one that we still have to shape. "We in Europe" – these words are both an assesssment and a challenge.

John Donne, British poet and theologian (1572–1631).

places of work, and wherever we may be able to exert influence. The English poet John Donne put this into words, more than three hundred years ago: "No man is an island," he wrote in 1624, "entire of itself. Every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or of thine own were."

This concept of belonging, of the togetherness of people and countries in Europe was expressed at the time of a terrible, murderous conflict, the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). Were those lines by John Donne the product of naive optimism ? Certainly not. They were an appeal to remove the divide, and to strengthen everyone's commitment to peace, freedom and human rights in view of the horrors of war. Donne knew that there was no empty promise behind his appeal, but the experience and the insights of a more than two-thousand year old history. This still holds true today: The riches of a colourful, varied, captivating European history are anything but a cumbersome burden on our way into the future; they are an important incentive. A former Polish foreign secretary, Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, summed it up thus: "Europe, this means above all the freedom of the individual, it means human rights, political as much as economical. This is a democratic order, borne by all citizens. It is the constitutional state. And at the same time, it is the reflection upon the fate of mankind and moral order, which stems from our Judaeo-Christian traditions and the incomparable beauty of culture."

Sophie Scholl (1921–1943): Leading member of the German anti-Nazi resistance movement "White Rose", guillotined on 22 February 1943.

"Freedom of speech, freedom of belief, the protection of the individual citizen against the despotism of tyrannic states, these are the foundations of the new Europe."

EXCERPT FROM LEAFLET NO. 5 OF THE ANTI-NAZI RESISTANCE MOVEMENT "THE WHITE ROSE", JANUARY 1943

"It took a long time for Europe to grow together to the extent which we take for granted today. Countless wars and their cruel consequences have paved the way, and often it seemed as though European culture had been lost. Particularly in view of this past and in recognition of the great Europeans of past times, we must not cease to press on with the growing together of our continent so as to safeguard peaceful coexistence of European peoples."

SWENJA SURMINSKI, BORN 1975, IN 'YOUTH BUILDS EUROPE 2000', RHEINISCHER MERKUR, 13 JANUARY 1995

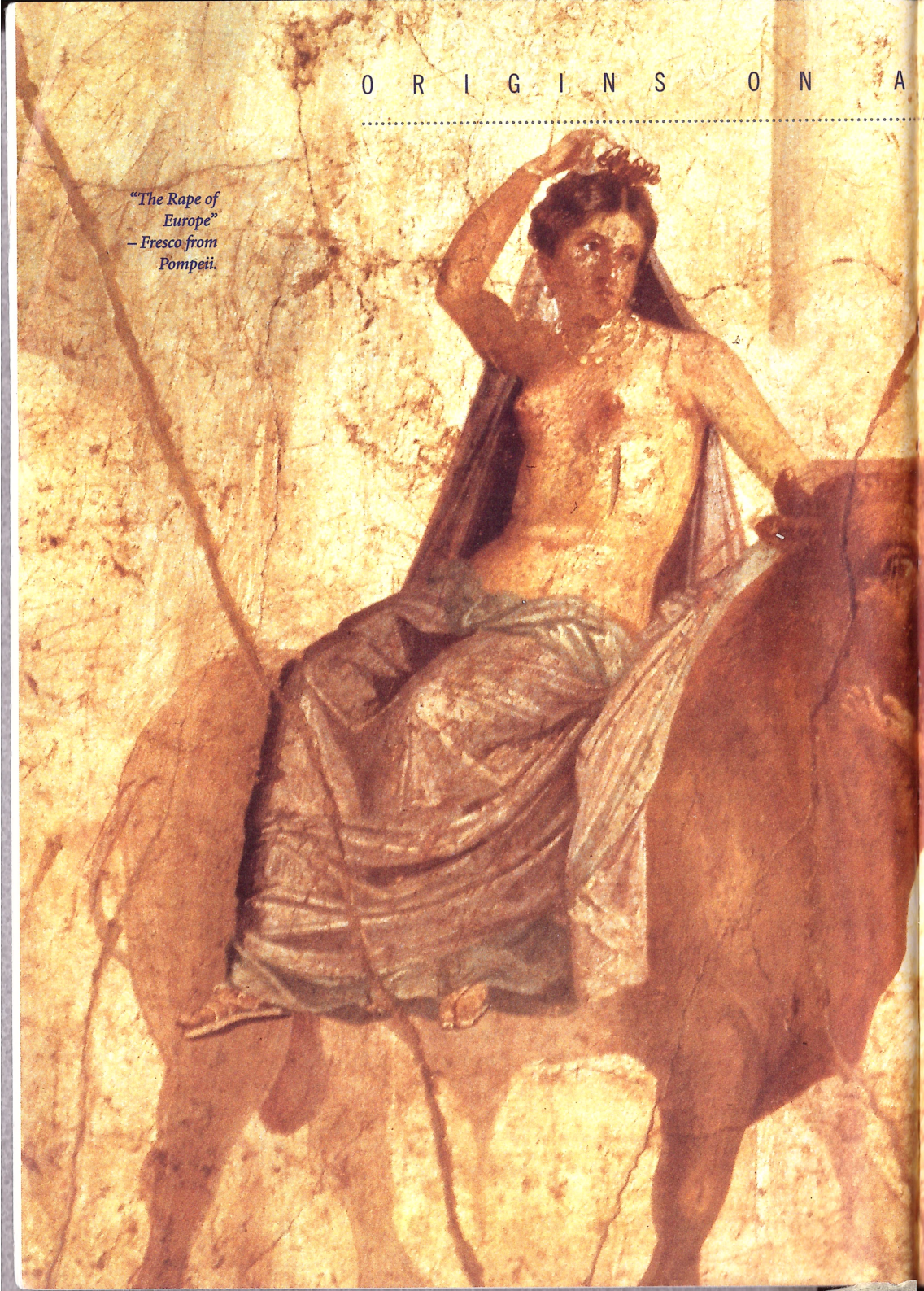
"Europe is a community of peace, a community of freedom, a community of democracies, a community of economies, a community of stability, a community of security. All these communities stand on the foundations of a common spiritual and intellectual heritage. And yet, they do not fall into our lap by themselves. They resemble unfinished cathedrals on which one has to work incessantly."

ROMAN HERZOG, PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, SPEECH AT THE FORUM 'ZUKUNFT FÜR EUROPA' (FUTURE FOR EUROPE) IN BERLIN, 7 NOVEMBER 1996

Christine Lieberknecht, the young Minister for Federal Affairs in the German federal state of Thuringia and one of those courageous politicians who personify a new democratic beginning at the end of communist East Germany, and who make a constructive contribution to the role of a reunited Germany in the heart of Europe, recently called for a new European awareness of our origins. She called upon us all to "make sure that the sources will not dry up, the sources from which is fed the true strength of European thinking: the never flagging intellectual vividness and energy, the interest in controversy, the capability to recognize problems, to describe and to solve them rationally." She stood in the tradition of the Spanish writer Salvador de Madariaga who, in his "Portrait of Europe" in 1952, wrote: "Let us create a Europe which is both Socratic and Christian, both full of doubt and full of faith, full of freedom and order, full of diversity and unity."

Such a Europe would fulfill our endeavours to safeguard the achievements of the post-war era: peace and freedom must be guaranteed, and other tasks can only be tackled on a European and a global scale – the environment cannot be protected by one country alone, the fight against terrorism and crime demands the concerted action of partners. It is therefore all the more noteworthy that further countries, particularly from Central and Eastern Europe, intend to join the European Union.

Images, quotes, sources, reviews and previews have been brought together in this book as a contribution to a better understanding of our common Europe, the one that exists and the one that we still have to shape. "We in Europe" – these words are both an assesssment and a challenge.



"The Rape of Europe" – Fresco from Pompeii.

A young girl called Europa, legends and myths from ancient times: The adventure of origins shrouded in mystery, and old traces still visible today.

I. The Bull and the Virgin

The unity of European culture is simply the end-product of 3000 years of labour by our diverse ancestors. It is a heritage which we spurn at our peril, and of which it would be a crime to deprive younger and future generations. Rather it is our task to preserve and renew it.

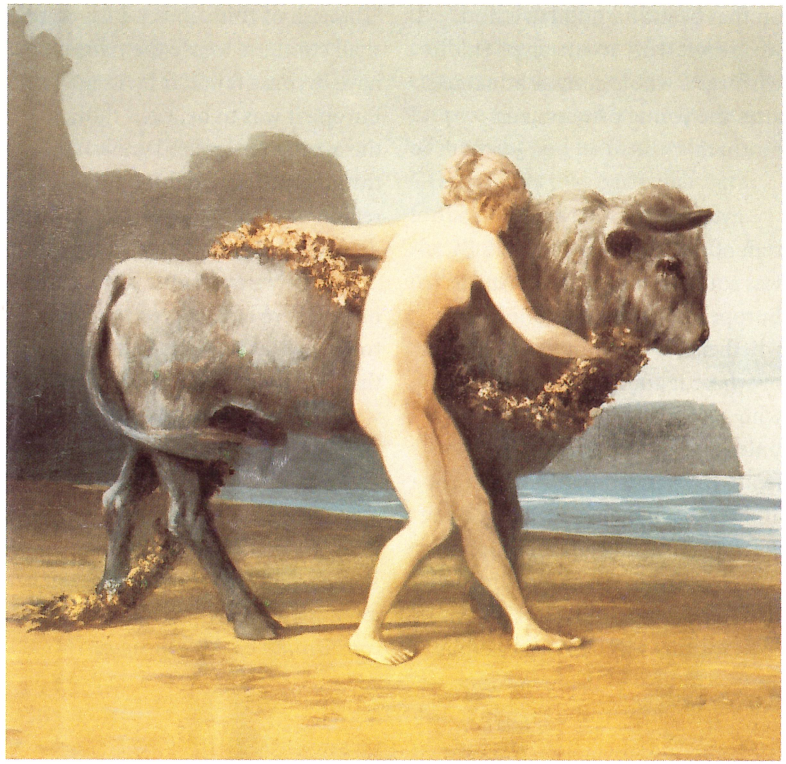
HUGH SETON-WATSON,
WHAT IS EUROPE, WHERE IS EUROPE? FROM MYSTIQUE TO POLITIQUE, 1985

Gifted beyond expectation
to apply all the arts, man
does today good, and evil tomorrow.
He supports the laws of his land
and the rights which he swore to the gods
in the city above.
Expelled from the city is he who yields
to injustice for daring.
Neither be he my guest at the hearth
Nor of like mind with me,
He who acts in this way.

SOPHOCLES, ANTIGONE, C. 440 BC

The peoples in the colder regions of Europe are courageous, but they have hardly any talent for intellectual and artistic matters and therefore more easily maintain their freedom, but are incapable of forming a union with other nations and to rule over their neighbours.

ARISTOTLE, POLITICS, C. 335 BC



'Zeus and Europa': colour print, c. 1905, after a painting by Maximilian Dasio (1865–1954).

The Myth of Europe

Europe is Asian. Strange as this may sound, the European continent which, on the map, looks like a kind of westward peninsula of Asia, owes its very name to a girl from Asia Minor. Her story is told in Greek mythology:

Europa, we learn, was the daughter of the Phoenecian king Agenor and his wife, Telephassa. Phoenecia – a vaguely familiar name from history perhaps, and yet, this ancient country still makes the headlines. It is the coastal region between the Carmel Mountains and the Nahr el-Kelb, now belonging partly to Israel, partly to Lebanon – an area of conflict and unrest.

There, in what today is the Lebanon, near Sidon or Tyre, the legendary Agenor was king, and his daughter was playing on the beach, when Zeus, the father of the gods, appeared on the scene, changed into a bull and carried her off to Crete. This, at any rate, was a first step in the direction of the continent we have come to call Europe. And while Zeus proceded to father three sons by Europa, the king's daughter,

on that beautiful holiday island, we are left with an unsolved riddle: why was a whole continent named after the young princess and mother?

Even Herodotus, the first historian of antiquity (c. 484–425 BC), was somewhat bemused: "And as to Europe", he wrote, "no one knows whether it is surrounded by the sea or where it got its name from, or who gave it to this continent – unless we agree that it originated from a Tyrian woman called Europa and was as nameless as all the other continents, until she came along." But Herodotus was not really inclined to believe all this, "for", he stated, "Europa was an Asian woman and never visited the area which we today call Europe; she merely travelled from Phoenicia to Crete and from Crete to Lycia." And, slightly bored, he concludes his survey:

"I urged you when I went to Macedonia: stay in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer, nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. They promote controversies rather than God's work."

PAUL,
FIRST LETTER TO TIMOTHY,
1: 3–4, C. AD 55

"Enough of this subject. I for one shall continue to use the names that have become familiar by usage." So Europe it was to be, even though the area so designated grew, through the ages, from a small region of Greece to its modern size.

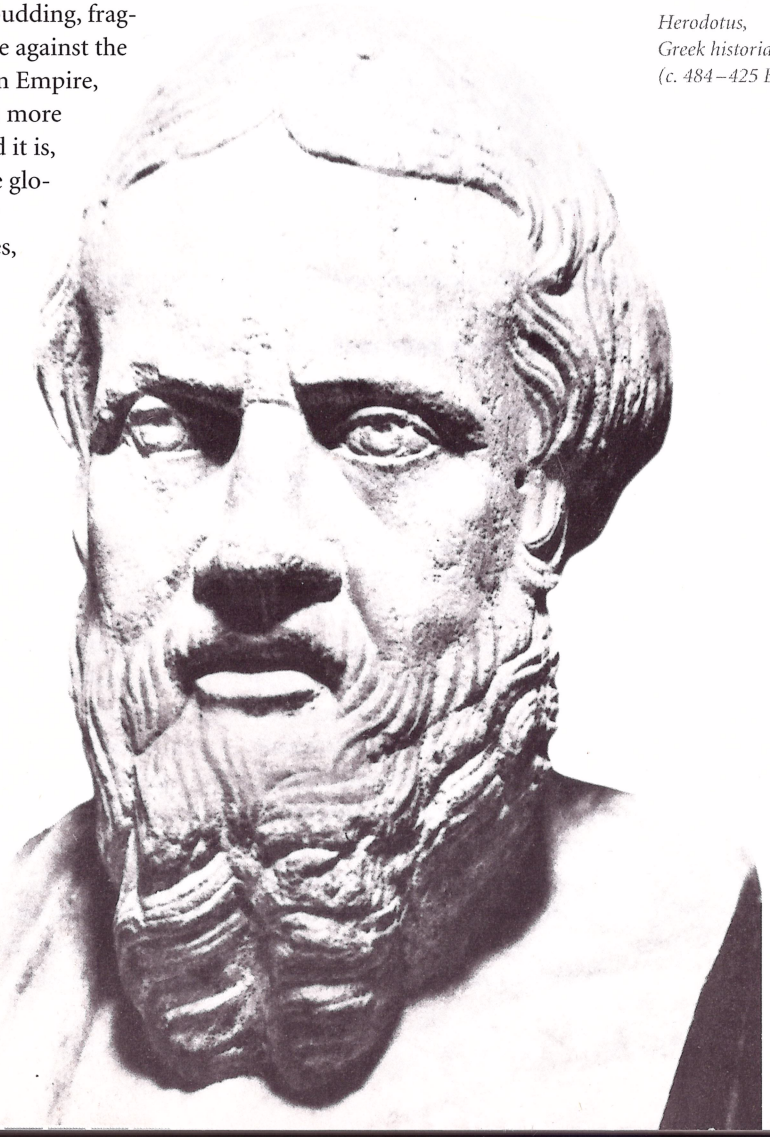
Equally mysterious is the name itself. There is, however, a hint of romanticism behind the suggestion that it was derived from a Semitic word, "Ereb" ("Dark", or "evening").

"Finally, if we add that many domestic animals are reared in Europe, and that there are few wild animals, we get a general idea of the constitution of this continent."

STRABO,
GEOGRAPHICA, C. AD 10

It is reminiscent of the Occident, where the sun sets, or of the dark beginnings into which, as the Old Testament prophet Ezekiel knew so well, the light shone from the East (Ezekiel 43:2). And yet, sadly, all of this remains speculation – as does that other theory which holds that the name of the continent is derived from the Greek word "euruopa", "looking far". We just do not know – a mysterious enigma at the beginning, no historical thunderbolt, but a long searching for an identity.

Herodotus, at any rate, was sceptical about Europe. For him, it was at best a geographical term without any spiritual, philosophical or political connection with the landmass or its peoples. As a Greek looking back on the successful struggle of a budding, fragmented Greece against the mighty Persian Empire, his thinking is more complex – and it is, in a way, more global. A century before Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, he is nevertheless capable of describing the Greek idea of mankind by contrasting East and West: the eastern absolutism of the Persian Empire as opposed to the freedom of the West and its institutions. Greece fights that particular battle, for herself, and for others, and she wins. "Europe", however, is not yet at stake.



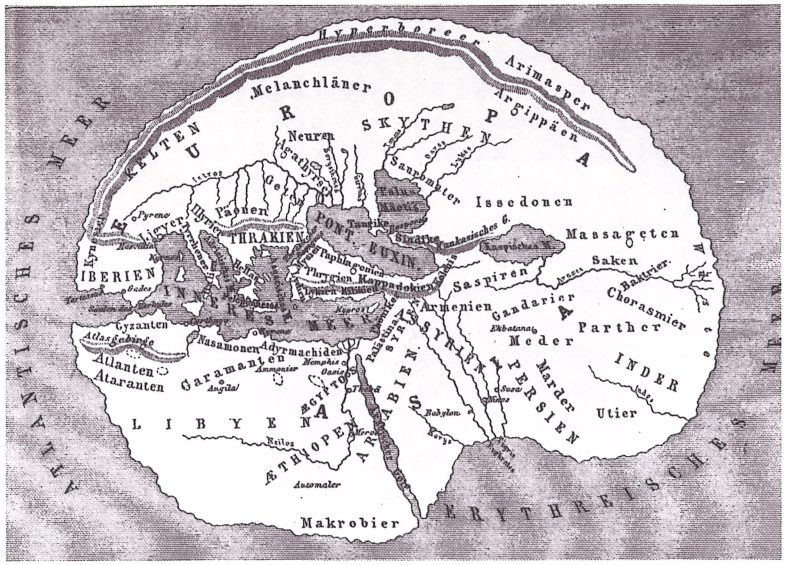
Herodotus, Greek historian (c. 484–425 BC).

Although it is the smallest of the three continents, Europe has qualities for which one must prefer it to the others. The European climate is unusually mild, and the different regions are exceptionally fertile, apart from those which do not belong to the mainland. It has all kinds of goods in abundance, and the peoples are usually gentle, honest, educated and achieve remarkable things in the arts and in the sciences.

LOUIS MORERI,
GRAND DICTIONNAIRE HISTORIQUE, 1674

And when Europe is in us, in the fullness of its variety and unending tasks, then Europe is here now, as providence and fate; and when this form is not our innermost being, as the life of our life, the "heart of heart", as Hamlet says to Horatio – then Europe is no more, and its earth is nothing but the battlefield of powers that have been mechanized into the inhuman.

REINHOLD SCHNEIDER,
EUROPA ALS LEBENSFORM, 1957



The earth, according to Herodotus.

Europe – Where is it?

Europe today – we all have a rough idea about how it extends from Portugal in the west to the Urals in the east, from the North Cape in Norway to the Italian 'boot' in the south. This, we think, is it; and most of us do not bother with questions of detail like the integration of holiday islands in the west of the continent, European by acquisition and certainly by touristic conquest, or the area of Ceuta in North Africa which is Spanish and hence European, or indeed why the Urals, dividing Russia into two, should be the eastern demarcation line.

Those who can accept the lack of precision of those borders are once again in the good company of Herodotus, the Greek historian born in Asia Minor. For he declared that he could not help laughing about the absurdities of the cartographers. There was just one point on which he was absolutely certain: To him, Europe was larger than Asia and Libya taken together. An important point: Europe, Asia and Libya were the three decisive entities in the early historiography of the ancients. The north eastern border ran along the river Don, but the areas to the east of the Bosporus, precisely where modern Turkey is situated, were excluded. The peculiar and the flexible, the absurd and the realistic, it was part and parcel of Europe's origins from the very beginning. Today's nation state of Turkey which stretches into geographical Europe – as defined by Herodotus – at its westernmost corner, invites us

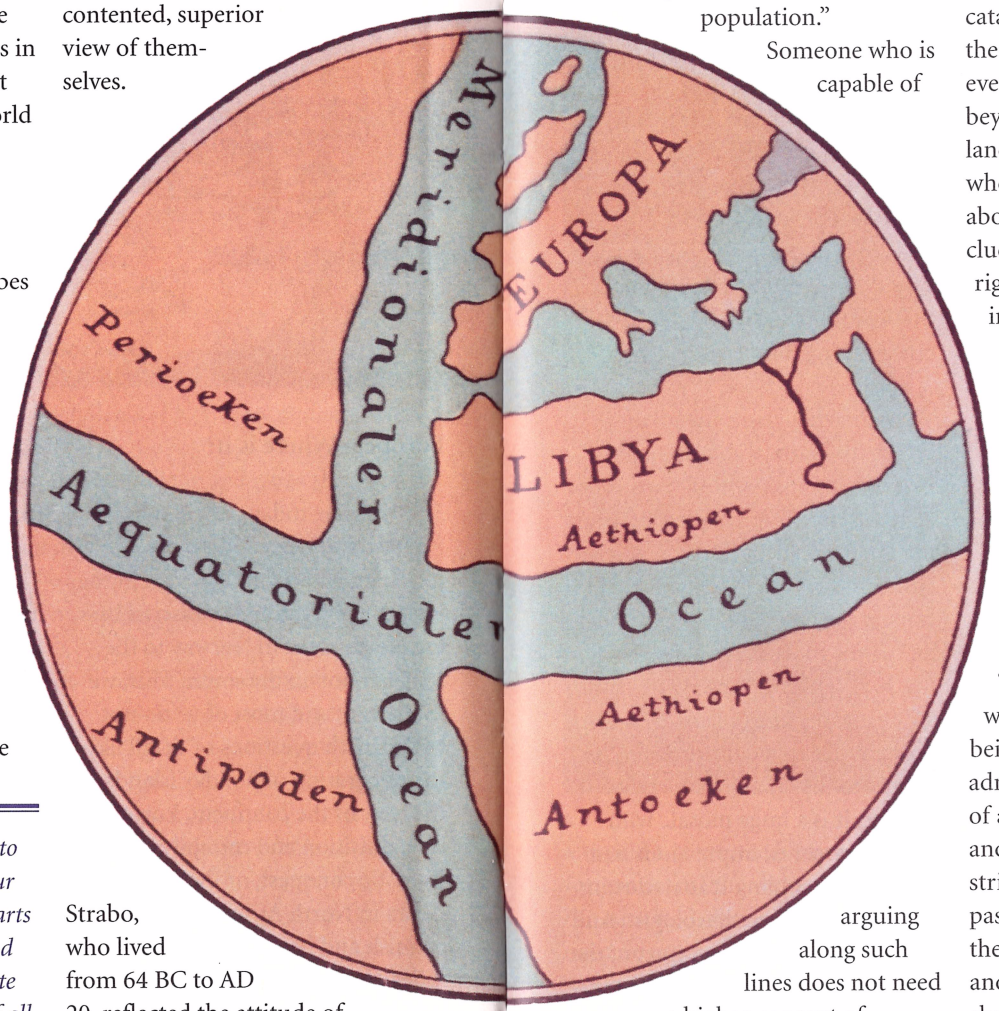
Map of the world, after Crates of Mallos, a Greek grammarian (c. 167 BC).

to reflect upon such concepts as does Israel, a country whose northern regions once belonged to the Phoenician kingdom from which that girl called Europa had been abducted. So it is par for the course that, while Israel competes in the European basketball league, it has to qualify for the football World Cup via the Asia Group.

It would seem that Bernard-Henry Lévy is right, at least in defining Europe which he describes not as a place, but as an idea. Or should we try and be just a little bit more precise: did not Europe after all develop from small local origins into an idea, and that idea became an aim linking individuals, peoples, and countries? Any retrospection necessitates humility, for none of the great ancient empires understood Europe as as a political, let alone as an intellectual or spiritual entity. Even the Romans, firmly established in the centre of a unique empire which, at its peak, extended from Africa to Britain, from Portugal far into Asia, were simply not interested in Europe as an idea. They had a self-contented, superior view of themselves.

"The people of antiquity liked to separate the inhabited world of our northern hemisphere into three parts which they called Asia, Europe and Africa. And thus the island of Crete seems to be on the dividing line of all three parts of the world."

GIOVANNI BOCCACCIO, COMMENTARY ON DANTE'S "DIVINA COMMEDIA", 1373



Strabo, who lived from 64 BC to AD 20, reflected the attitude of the Romans aptly when he wrote: "After all, our country is situated between the mightiest peoples, between Greece on one side and the most excellent regions of Libya (that is, Africa) on the other. And therefore, it is by definition and on principle made for hegemony. Add to this that it surpasses its neighbouring countries in virtue and population."

Someone who is capable of arguing along such lines does not need a higher concept of Europe. And we know from 20th century European history that such ideas of supremacy were not confined to the ancient Romans. Even Pliny the Elder, highly-educated, a brilliant natural historian and philosopher, well-acquainted with the peoples and customs of the countries under Roman rule, himself a victim of one of the great natural catastrophies of European history, the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79, even Pliny is incapable of looking beyond the confines of his fatherland's greatness: "All over the world, wherever the dome of the heavens is above us, one thing must be included among all those which may rightfully claim to take first place in nature: Italy, the guide and second mother of the world."

Pliny the Elder: Gaius Plinius Secundus, AD 23–79, Roman historian and scientist. 19th century etching.

And as late as the early fifth century, when the Empire was becoming more and more Christian and other criteria gained importance, the writer Rutilius, who was proud not to be a Christian, was still praising the supremacy of "Italia", the "ruler of the world" – of the world, not just of Europe – as being divinely ordained: "Let us admit," he wrote in his description of a journey from Rome to Gaul, and comparing the northern districts unfavourably with the unsurpassable perfection of Italy, "that the world was created by intellect and by wise counsel, and that a God shaped this work."

There was not the faintest trace of the "Europe of the fatherlands", almost proverbially envisaged by Charles de Gaulle in our century, in

Charles de Gaulle (1890–1970). French general and President of the French Republic, 1945–1946, 1958–1969.

the writings of Pliny or Rutilius. Nevertheless, Rutilius gives us a hint of an idea which was to become characteristic of the concept of Europe in later centuries. For precisely in his denial of the Christian faith which by his time had long gained political protection and social power, and in his praise of the ancient gods led by one single godhead who of course was not the Judaeo-Christian god, but, if anything, the ubiquitous "unknown God" referred to by the Apostle Paul in his famous speech on the Athenian Areopagus, Rutilius prepared the ground for what the German theologian and historian Peter Meinhold summarized thus: "'Europe' is the only area in world history of which we can say that its development, from its historically tangible origins until our own time has been shaped by meeting, struggle and conflict as much as by the neighbourhood and fellowship of religions – a process which did not happen anywhere else, in any other sphere, with such an intensity and concentration." This, after all, would be a common denominator. But was this all? Was there nothing else, nothing more?

"And so I want to travel Europe with my pen, as far as it is known to man. It begins at the Rhipaean Mountains – in Scythia –, on the river Don and at the Maotic Marshes in the east. Along the coastline of the northern sea it continues down to Belgian Gaul and to the river Rhine which descends from the west; then on to the river Danube which here is also called Ister and turns from south to east, in the direction of the Black Sea. In the east of Europe, there is the country of the Alans, in the middle the region of the Dacians and Goths, and finally we reach Germania which is mainly inhabited by the Suebi. All in all, 54 nations live in Europe."

Orosius, History, ca. AD 418

We have to continue in our search for clues; and in spite of Peter Meinhold's optimism, it is not all that simple. In the years between the First and Second World Wars, T.S. Eliot, an American who became a naturalized Briton, wrote one of the most famous poems of the 20th century, "The Waste Land". He creates a panoroma of European, Western, Eastern culture, from the Greeks to the Upanishads and to Goethe. It is a huge mosaic with many fragments, impressions and pictures resembling scattered ruins unearthed by an archaeologist. And at the end, left with nothing but the last, tiny fragments, Eliot asks a question: "I sat upon the shore / Fishing, with the arid plain behind me / Shall I at least set my lands in order?" We can see the wide compass of experience, from the unlimited superiority of the Roman

Thomas Stearns Eliot (1888–1965), Anglo-American poet, essayist and editor. Nobel Prize for Literature in 1948.

St Paul in Prison. Painting by Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn (1606–1669).

who did not yet need Europe, to the resignation of the representative of the educated classes who does not need Europe anymore, already too weak perhaps to shape his own country. It may look like a circle, but it is not closed. For precisely at the point where T.S. Eliot ends, the new and future Europe begins. "These fragments I have shored against my ruins", Eliot writes. But the fragments, the broken pieces and ruins of our past have always been more than unconnected remnants. They are reconstructable, and, put together, they are indeed more than the sum of their parts. The Roman Empire, with its many cultures, provides us with a visual, tangible starting point even today, as we shall see in the following chapter.

Augustus shows the way: An empire without frontiers emerges, where people can travel, do business, philosophise, write and talk to each other as never before.

II. The Roman Empire

Augustus (63 BC–14 AD), Roman Emperor.

We naturally think of the Empire founded by Augustus as the Roman Empire. It was Roman arms which conquered it; the Caesars, who founded its institutions, were Roman; and Rome was its capital. But in fact Rome was not its natural centre of gravity. The wealth which sustained it came largely from Asia and Africa, and particularly from the East. Africa supplied the city of Rome with two-thirds of its corn. It was the conquest of Egypt which enabled Augustus to establish the Empire, the tribute of eastern provinces which kept it going.

HUGH TREVOR-ROPER,
THE RISE OF CHRISTIAN EUROPE, 1966

Three months later, we left the island of Malta in a ship from Alexandria which had wintered in the island and which had the figurehead of the twin gods Castor and Pollux. We reached Syracuse and stayed there for three days. From there we sailed along the coastline and arrived at Rhegium. The next day, the south wind came up, and so we reached Puteoli in two days. Here we met some brothers; they asked us to spend a week with them. And so we went to Rome.

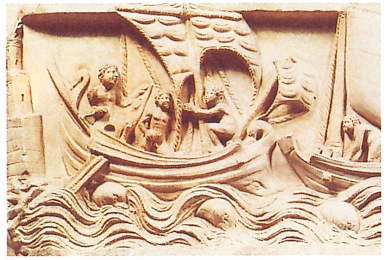
LUKE,
ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, C. AD 60

The Battle in the Teutoburg Forest: On the 9th September AD 9, the Germanic Cherusci under their chieftain Arminius annihilated three Roman legions led by the legate Quinctilius Varus at Kalkriese near Osnabrück.

Coloured print after a painting by Friedrich Gunkel (1819–1876).

Frontiers disappear

„I have given the sea a rest from the pirates" – a sober sentence in the long list of achievements which Emperor Augustus compiled in the official record of his enterprises, the so-called 'Monumentum Ancyranum' of AD 14, when he was 76 years old. It documents a state of affairs which modern Europe is slowly beginning to move towards: borderless, unhindered travel, commerce, and communication throughout the realm. The means employed by Augustus to attain this are not ours: the pacification of the seas or the safeguarding of the outer frontiers and the inner boundaries between the different peoples were hardly the result of patient negotiation. Applying the customary habits of his time, but comparatively less militaristic than his predecessors, he let his legions speak for him whenever he thought it necessary. And occasionally, he had to pay the unpleasant penalty: in central Europe, for example, near the Teutoburg Forest, his legate Varus lost no fewer than three whole legions when they were ambushed by German troops under Arminius. It was the end of the Emperor's central European policy, and the Roman Empire never incorporated middle or eastern Germany, the Baltic or Poland, let alone areas further east. Some would say, with a hint of irony perhaps, that a



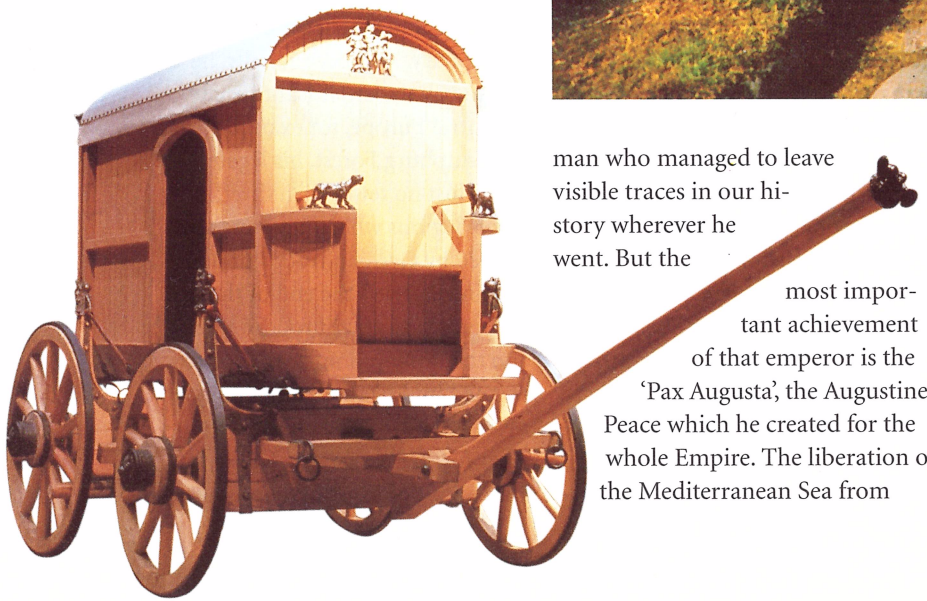
Cargo ship. From a relief on a Roman sarcophagus, 3rd century AD.

cultural fracture can still be detected between west and east, along the 'Limes', the old Roman frontier.

And there is the Story of the Nativity, from St Luke's Gospel, traditionally read to families at Christmas, and in churches all over the world. "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed." Others would prefer, year after year, the warmest and sunniest month of the summer holidays, named by Augustus after himself. A remarkable man who managed to leave visible traces in our history wherever he went. But the most important achievement of that emperor is the 'Pax Augusta', the Augustine Peace which he created for the whole Empire. The liberation of the Mediterranean Sea from pirates, highlighted by Augustus himself in his record, was instrumental in this: For the first time, that decisive link between the regions of the Empire could be travelled without fear of robbery, captivity or death. In order to understand what this meant in the early stages of Europe, we have to appreciate how places were linked and how international means of communication functioned then, and how they work today:

Where possible, people used waterways for their journey, for these – the Mediterranean as much as rivers and canals – provided protection against robbers, wild animals or against the risk of passing malaria-infested areas. Using the most efficient means in good

The Appian Way, Via Appia, near Rome today, with ruins and parts of the original road surface.



Reconstruction of a Roman coach.

Roman road map of the 3rd century AD.

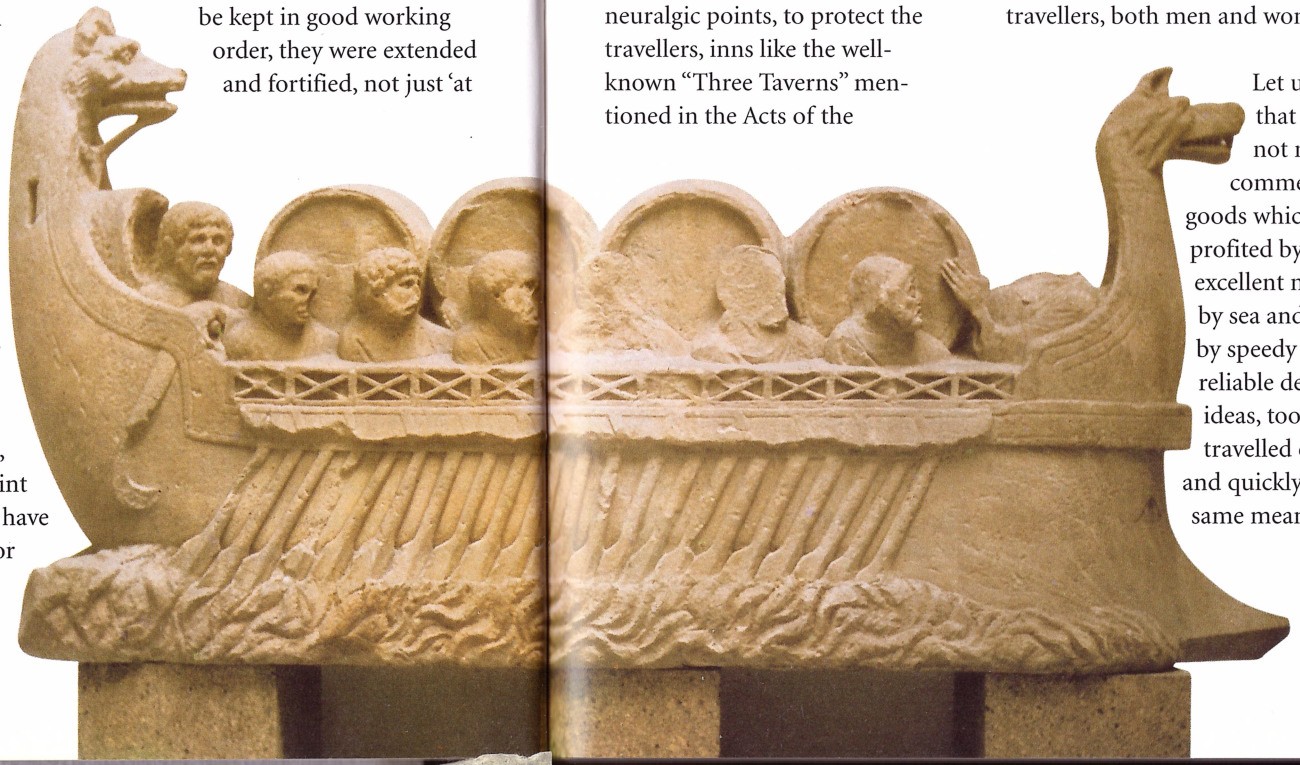
weather conditions, a ship carrying letters or books could reach the Roman port of Ostia from Corinth in five or six days – modern postal services hardly ever match that speed, nor would they be able to deliver mail from Rome to Alexandria in Egypt in just three days, as the Romans did. Cicero's latest book, produced on a scroll in Rome, could be read in northern African libraries or in the philosophical centres of Greece within a week. And St Luke's Gospel, with Augustus as a focal point in the Nativity Story, could have been studied in Marseilles or Lyon, in Geneva or Trier (flourishing towns in those days) within a fortnight or so after the first copies had been made.

Ports, roads, and stations had to be kept in good working order, they were extended and fortified, not just 'at home', but everywhere in the Empire. And we today, with our modern traffic arteries, are still profiting from this heritage. The most important western European trunk roads are built on or along the old Roman ways.

Even so, in spite of all those advantages – freedom of travel, the engineering standard, and security – , travelling was never without its dangers. Sea storms endangered ships, and St Luke gives an historical account of such a voyage, from Crete to Malta, which nearly ended in the death of St Paul and the others. A particular stretch of the famous Via Appia, south of the malaria-infested Pomptine Marshes, was notorious for daylight robberies. Thus, troups were stationed at neuralgic points, to protect the travellers, inns like the well-known "Three Taverns" mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles lined the roads at regular intervals.

Needless to say, the excellent connections were used for tourist purposes even in those days. Almost nothing seems to be new: even car hire was available. Anyone could rent a horse or a carriage at the beginning of his journey and return it to another branch of the firm at his destination. Famous sites were surrounded by souvenir shops, there were tourist guides and handy leaflets for the hurried visitor. When Helena, Emperor Constantine's mother, made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in AD 325, inventing international Christian tourism and Christian archaeology at a stroke, she found herself in a long lineage of seasoned travellers, both men and women.

Let us add that it was not merely commercial goods which profited by this excellent network by sea and land, by speedy and reliable delivery: ideas, too, travelled easily and quickly by the same means.



The wine ship from Neumagen near Trier. Roman sculpture, 2nd/3rd century AD, fragment of a wine merchant's tomb stone.

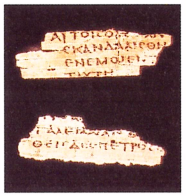
St. Luke the Evangelist. Illuminated manuscript, 9th century.

There were in Jerusalem Jews, godfearing men from all peoples under heaven. When they heard that sound, a crowd come together in bewilderment, for each one heard the apostles speak in his own language. They were utterly amazed and asked: 'Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it possible that each of us hears them in his own native language – Parthians, Medes and Elamites, citizens of Mesopotamia, from Judaea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Lybia near Cyrene, and visitors from Rome?'

LUKE,
ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, C. AD 60.

Emperor Claudius studied Greek with particular diligence, and on every occasion, he emphasized his love for this language and its advantages. To a barbarian who spoke Greek and Latin, he said:' Since you master both our languages ...'. And when he recommended Greece to his senators, he explained that he loved this province for its common scientific relations with Rome. And in Senate, he often answered the delegates from Greece fluently in their language.

SUETONIUS,
LIFE OF CLAUDIUS, C. AD 120.



Two of three fragments of the oldest known manuscript of St Matthew's Gospel, from c. AD 70. On the bottom fragment, the last legible word is PETROS (= Peter), Matthew 26:33.

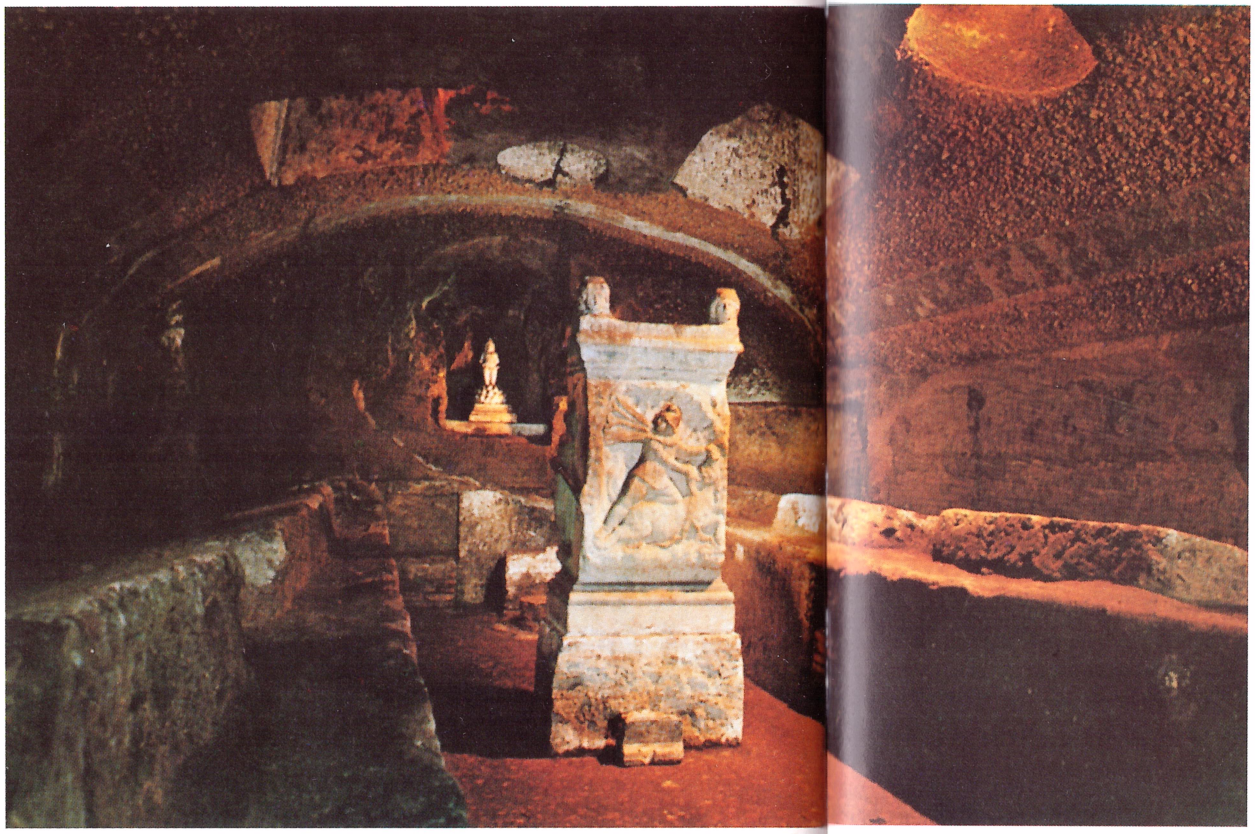
Top left: A mural from the Domitilla Catacombs in Rome, c. AD 200: On the right hand side, the martyr St Petronilla (d. AD 98) is shown with an open codex at her left shoulder. The practical, handy codex, precursor of the modern book format, was made popular by the Christians and replaced the traditional scrolls, shown next to St Petronilla's feet in a capsa ("capsule"), the usual scroll container.

Travel educates: Languages, Religions and Cultures

„Only 27 % of all British and French civil servants working for European institutions speak more than one language: this is what the London 'Times' reported in early 1995, quoting from a handbook of politicians and civil servants in the European Union. It could not have happened to civil servants in European and pre-European antiquity. Perfect bilingualism was the norm – indeed, it was a minimum requirement. Greek and Latin were obligatory.

Throughout the ages, there were preferences and fashions. Occasionally, people preferred Greek, the language of philosophy and the great epics and tragedies, to the somewhat more earthbound Latin, and in the Middle Ages, Latin was the 'lingua franca' of the educated classes, as much as French was regarded as the one and only true language of society in 18th century Europe. Frederick the Great of Prussia, who saw himself as a philosopher and educator rather than a warrior king, invited Voltaire to his court and was proud of speaking a French that was by far superior to his native German. But whatever the reasons, multilingualism

Right: The Sanctuary of Mithras underneath the church of San Clemente in Rome. The cult of Mithras was particularly popular among soldiers and officers in the 3rd and 4th centuries and was one of the most widespread rivals to Christianity at that time. Mithras sanctuaries have been found all over Roman Europe.

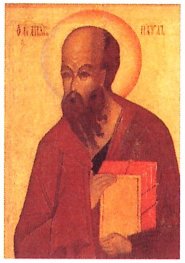


Above: Author (poet or philosopher) with writing implement. Mosaic floor from the Procurators' Palace in Trier, c. AD 200.

opened doors and helped to build bridges, it facilitated careers and contributed to a better understanding among peoples, based on the free and comprehensible trade of ideas.

According to modern national boundaries, for example, the Roman philosopher and dramatist Seneca, educator of the young Nero, was a Spaniard from Córdoba. Emperor Claudius was a Frenchman from Lyons, the Apostle Paul a Turk from Tarsus, and Emperor Constantine a Serb from Nic who was brought up in England. All of them were capable of conversing freely and intelligently in the languages of the Roman Empire, regardless of their 'national' extraction. And what is more: this was no privilege of the upper echelons of society. Even simple fishing entrepreneurs like Simon Peter, Andrew, John and James from the circle of Jesus' disciples, born and brought up in a corner of the Roman Empire on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, knew three languages: the Hebrew of the Bible and the synagogue, everyday Aramaic, and Greek which they used in their daily dealings with traders on the Via Maris which touched the Lake on its route between Damascus and the Mediterranean. Later we learn that pickled fish from the Sea of Galilee was sold in the delicatessen shops of Rome.

In today's Europe, we are a long way from this portrait of an absolutely natural knowledge of more than one or two languages, in spite of our advanced educational systems. This aspect of the Roman Empire had become so distant that until recently many doubted the ability of Jesus, his disciples and their followers to communicate in Greek. Only the many archaeological discoveries, tombstones, inscriptions, papyri and potsherds from this region and this period eventually proved the normality of multilingualism beyond doubt. Tellingly, this shows that Christianity, after all, was capable of playing a role alongside the multitude of religions and philosophies, because Christians knew the languages and used the techniques of communication which were available to all, from one end of the Empire to the other. Add to this that communicators at that time switched languages easily. When a German scientist today decides to publish in English because German has lost its rank as an international language of science, when a French businessman has to brood over the question whether to abandon his pride in French because even a less than perfect English will be understood by many more people in Europe, they are facing a problem unknown to the first Europeans. Greek was not a 'foreign', alien tongue, it was a kind of second skin. When St Paul asked the Roman authorities in Caesarea who had taken him in protective detention, to hand him over to the Emperor in Rome, he never doubted whether



The Apostle Paul, 16th century icon.

Plato, Greek philosopher, pupil of Socrates and teacher of Aristotle, founder of the Academy in Athens, c. 427–347 BC. Painting by Paolo Veronese (1528–1588).

his Italian (or Latin, for that matter) would be good enough for Rome. He knew that the Emperor and his men would speak Greek, like himself. And thus it was normal and self-evident that the Gospels and the Epistles were written in Greek. After all, the writers intended them to be read everywhere, in France, Spain, Germany or Britain (to use the modern terms again) as much as in Israel, Greece, Turkey, Italy or Egypt. A few centuries later, Latin took over from Greek as the linking international language of culture and commerce – particularly in the southern, western, northern and central regions of the Empire. And it was a smooth transition, well prepared since Latin had always been present in the wings, as the other, alternative 'lingua franca'.

In fact, the rivalry between the diverse opposing world views had never been regarded as an impediment by the Jews, nor was it seen as a problem by the Christians. The variety of cults, sectarian movements and popular superstitions was almost as manifold as it is today. Roman state religion and the imperial cult, the veneration of Mithras or the cult of Serapis, Isis, Osiris and Horus, Greek neo-Platonism, Egyptian myths, gnosticism and so forth: the list was almost endless. Anyone who was interested – and the Christians were most certainly very interested

Aristotle, Greek philosopher and scientist (384–322 BC). Painting by Justus van Ghent (c. 1435–c. 1481).

indeed – could join in and offer their produce on the marketplace of ideas, using the same language, and trying to win over others by the strength of their convictions, their lifestyles, and their arguments. Obviously, it was easier to meet this challenge when one had studied the different cultures, and when one had taken seriously the schools of thought and achievements of opponents without denying one's own position. That is never easy, neither then nor today. But anyone who wanted to offer something new and to bring it up for discussion, something that was meant to create links between individuals and peoples alike, certainly had to give it a try. In the anonymous letter to Diognetus, the author, writing in the second century, confirms that Christians "do not differ from the rest of mankind in their nationality, language

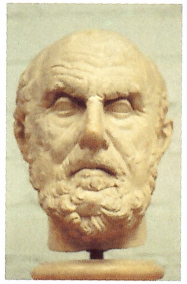
or dress. For they do not live in separate towns or use their own language or live their own separative lives. They live in towns which are full of Greek culture or void of it, just as the case may be, and they accept and follow the customs of their country." It may sound banal, but it was important for them in their aim to be a credible part of the society in which they intended to live and to operate. They were worlds apart from the self-conscious demands made by individuals as much as by representatives of religions in host countries today which are creating one of the unsolved problems of modern Europe.

The philosopher Clement of Alexandria, writing in the late second century, understood the role of cultural and spiritual life in this everday reality in a period of transition. He attempted to introduce Christian readers to the roots of civilization, the roots to be found in Socrates, in Plato, Aristotle and in many others. Clement had realized that new insights and perspectives would float in a kind of vacuum if they could not be linked with those earlier, fundamental achievements of the human intellect. The new Christian message could not simply be derived from its one vital source, from Judaism, from the Old Testament, from divine revelation. It had to be related to the experiences and to the knowledge of thinking men and women from other spheres of culture. In fact, St Paul himself, in New Testament times, had tried to practise this when he, the well-educated wandering preacher, spoke to the elite of the Athenian philosophers, the counsel of the Areopagus. There and then, he quoted from highly regarded Greek philosophers:

"God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said: For we are also his offspring."

The Acropolis in Athens.

The Greek philosopher Aratus (c. 315–c. 239 BC). He wrote a popular treatise



on astronomy, the Phainomena, from which St Paul quotes in his speech to the Athenian philosophers (Acts 17:28).

There it was, the instant recognition: in Athens, people knew their Aratus and their Cleanthes whom St Paul had just quoted, and from this juncture, one could build a bridge linking the familiar with the unknown which the apostle was indeed going to relate – the message of the resurrection. Small wonder then that some of the members of the elitist Areopagus soon decided to follow him. Clement of Alexandria later summed such insights up in a comprehensible formula: "Philosophy educated the whole Greek-speaking world much in the same ways as the Law educated the Jews. Therefore, philosophy is a preparation." And from the Christian point of view, this meant a preparation for perfection in faith. It will follow from this that someone who prefers to argue in such a circumspect way does not intend to make demands on others by force. He admits and presents his point of view, shows others how to understand and reach it, and is himself ready to listen and to learn. Against this background, we realize the lasting truth of an old observation: both pillars were essential to the budding Europe of antiquity and have remained essential until today: the heritage of Greek philosophy with its Roman proponents, and the teaching of Christianity with its roots in Judaism.

A DIVISION WHICH UNIFIES

New values assert themselves. Christianity finds its place alongside other religions and spreads across Europe. Binding norms of law regulate coexistence in society.

III. Sunrise in the West

Justinian (527–565), Byzantine Emperor

Mosaic in the Basilica of San Vitale, Ravenna, c. 547.

We do not want to prohibit anyone from turning to Christianity or to the religion which each one regards as the appropriate religion for himself.

CONSTANTINE AND LICINIUS,
EDICT OF MILAN, FEBRUARY AD 313

Thus, when all tyranny had been expurged, the empire was preserved in a certain and indisputed way for Constantine and for his sons. They, who had begun their office by cleansing the Empire of hatred of God, were conscious of the privileges he had granted them and displayed their love of virtue and of God, their piety and their gratitude towards the Godhead, by what they did in public.

EUSEBIUS,
CHURCH HISTORY, C. AD 325

Constantinople: the Hagia Sophia. First completed in 360, the church was rebuilt under Emperor Justinian in 532–537; since 1453 it has been a mosque.

West, East and a Reflection on the Essentials

„It is my desire, for the well-being of the earth and of all mankind, that your people may have peace and that it will not be shaken by rebellions. Together with the faithful, those who err shall be glad and shall have the benefit of peace and of contentment. For the charm of the community is powerful enough to reform them, too, and to show them the right way. No one may molest others. Everyone shall have and use what his soul desires." Words from a treatise about tolerance, written by Constantine the Great, the first truly Christian ruler of the Roman Empire, in AD 324.

Emperor Constantine the Great (280–337). Gold medallion, from the mint at Siscia (in modern Hungary), c. 326/327. According to his court historian Eusebius, this type of coin represents Constantine's prayerful look towards heaven.

"Your people" – this is the people of God, no longer a minority without rights, but by now a guarantor of law and justice at a time of social change. Constantine's sense of justice helped to

develop one of the central pillars of Occidental, and indeed of European civilization. Just as St Paul, referring to Greek philosophers in his speech to the Athenian philosophers, was able to point out that all men and women are of divine origin, Emperor Constantine was able to turn this thought into practical politics. The Christian God does not demand a class society. To begin with, the offer to accept Him and to believe in Him must not become coercion. On the contrary, the fact that He exists and that the Emperor obeys His laws guarantees equal treatment of all, before God's law, and, quite practically, before the law of the State. State authority intervened, however, when this basic tolerance was misused – for example, when temples of other religions continued to be used for purposes of prostitution – a popular custom at the time – , or when other groups infringed on the common weal and threatened social peace. Admittedly, this was a noble ideal which even under Constantine was never quite attained, as he himself realized only too well. But he had at least tried to point the way forward, and it was the right way.

And yet another course was adopted by Constantine, with unwavering perseverance: the course of decentralization. His predecessors had already placed a number of regional capitals beside Rome: Milan for example, Trier, and York. Constantine relinquished Rome as the one and only seat of decision-making, when he built a new capital in the East: Byzantium, that old centre of learning, was transformed into the magnifcent, glorious Constantinople, a city so grandiose that its ancient splendour can still be detected in modern Istanbul.

The emperor's move from Rome to Constantinople marked the culmination of a continuous development from west to east, from York in Britain, where Constantine had been proclaimed 'Augustus' by his troops in 306, via Trier, where he had resided as ruler over the western half of the

Emperor Constantine. Head of a fragmented colossal statue from his basilica in Rome, c. 330; today in the courtyard of the Capitoline Palace in Rome.

The four co-emperors or tetrarchs: a porphyry group, erected by Constantine in his new capital Constantinople, c. 335, and representing Diocletian, Maximinianus, Galerius, and Constantius Chlorus (Constantine's father). During the Renaissance, the group was taken to Venice where it can still be seen at a corner of the Doge's Palace. Diocletian's division of the Empire into tetrarchies introduced a split between East and West; and the line between the two spheres went through the Balkans.

Top: Excavation of the Imperial Palace at Milan in northern Italy. Here, the edict of the emperors Constantine and Lactantius was promulgated in 313; it officially recognized Christianity as a religion of the Roman Empire.

Bottom: Trier, western Germany: Constantine's basilica. In the early fourth century, it was the reception hall of the imperial palace; today, it is used as a Protestant church.

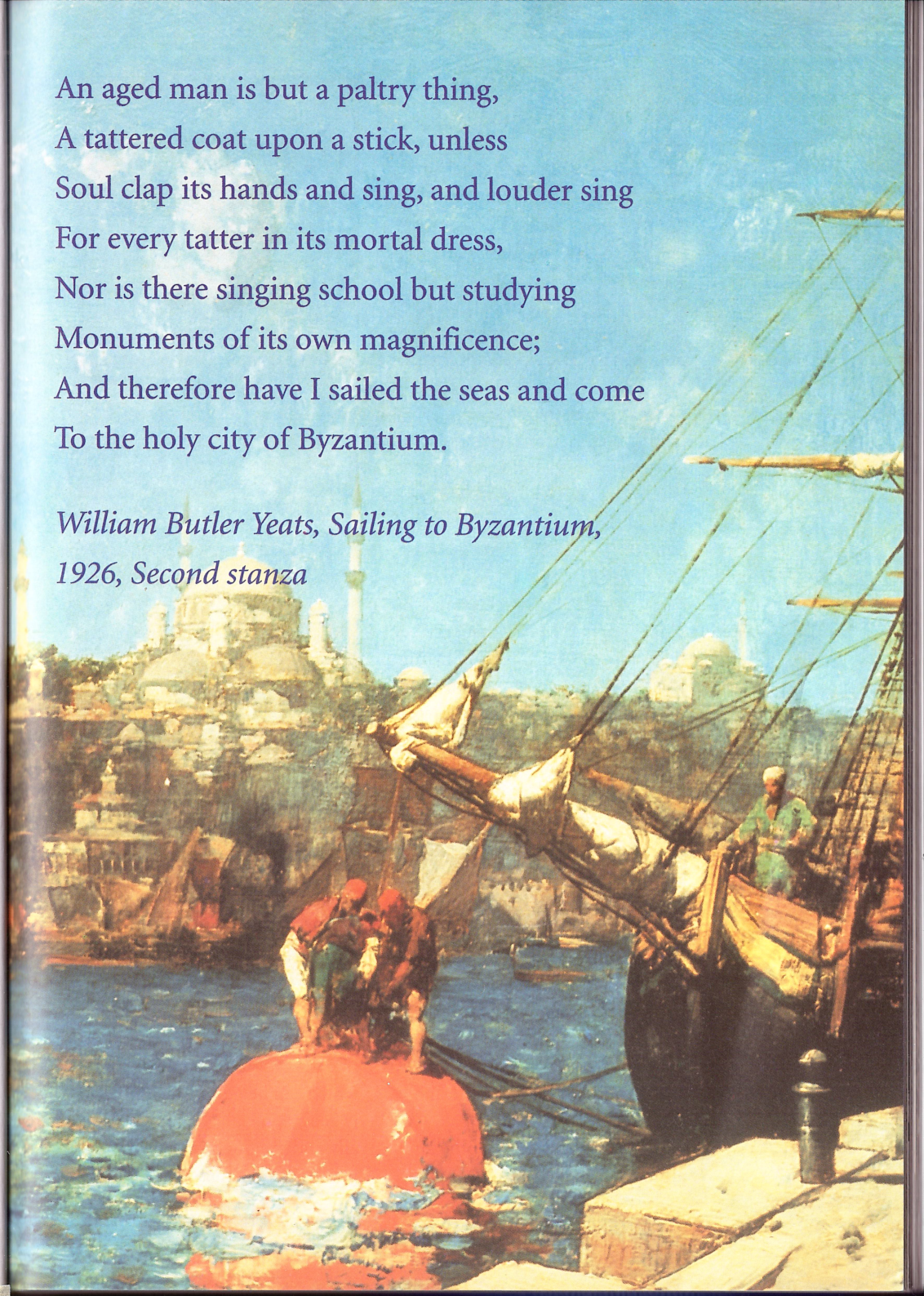
empire, to Rome, and from there to the very edges of the continent. Behind this development, there was a precise strategy, a very modern thought which is becoming better understood once more in Europe today: The empire was an accumulation of peoples who could only be governed and supported by efficient regional centres of administration. The epicentre, of course, was the emperor at his residence, and although he had a highly developed attachment to power, he was able to give this power a regional rather than a centralistic character, which went beyond his own person. Those who invoke the principle of "subsidiarity" as opposed to the ogre of a centralistic Europe governed by burocrats in Brussels, and who thereby support the idea that a central administration would only act as a regulator or decision-maker when the powers and the possibilities of regional and national adminstrations and institutions have been exhausted, would have found an ally in Constantine. He paved the way towards such a concept.

"After the barbarian invasions and the fall of the Emperor in Rome, the light of learning was almost extinguished in western Europe, apart from a few fitful monastic flickers; it was on the banks of the Bosphorus that it continued to blaze, and that the old classical heritage was preserved. Much of what we know of antiquity – especially of Greek and Latin literature and of Roman law – would have been lost for ever but for the scholars and scribes and copyists of Constantinople."

JOHN JULIUS NORWICH,
BYZANTIUM. THE EARLY CENTURIES, 1988

We can measure the remarkable progress achieved by Constantine's thoughts and actions when we compare it to the ideas of one of the great theologians of the preceding era: Origen, who died in AD 254. More than half a century before Christianity was acknowledged as a legitimate religion, and as a victim of persecution himself, Origen had no hope of ever seeing a political order which would provide justice for everyone, for individuals as much as for groups and peoples and nations. "Perhaps," he wrote, "such a polity is in truth impossible for men who live on earth and are confined to their bodies. but it may not be impossible for those who will be freed from their bodily form." Origen feeds his readers with hopes of the hereafter; with Constantine, such hopes soon turned into the first fruits of pragmatic, sociopolitical beginnings here on earth.

In defence of the pessimistic theologian it ought to be said that the Church soon drew her own conclusions from Constantine's example. And it was indeed a Christian



An aged man is but a paltry thing,
A tattered coat upon a stick, unless
Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing
For every tatter in its mortal dress,
Nor is there singing school but studying
Monuments of its own magnificence;
And therefore have I sailed the seas and come
To the holy city of Byzantium.

William Butler Yeats, Sailing to Byzantium, 1926, Second stanza

Right: "At the Golden Horn": Detail from a painting by Alberto Pasini (1826–1899).

historian who was the first to try and make sense of the concept of 'Europe': tentatively, but certainly conscious of the fact that spiritual ideas and practical actions must not be separated. Sulpicius Severus, in his biography of St Martin of Tours of c. AD 400, concluded that Europe had a place in the realm of salvation, as long as there were exemplary figures like St Martin.

And really, this Martin of Tours is still an attractive and popular character, Europe-wide, even some 1600 years after his death. Every year, on the 11th November, a culinary delight is served, a goose which the French call "l'oie de la Saint-Martin", and the Germans "Martinsgans". Martinmas services, processions with songs and hymns and many other customs are typical of this day. And all this in remembrance of a man who was born as a Hungarian (according to modern terminology), in a place called Szombathely, who died in Candes, in the French départment of Indre-et-Loire, and who had been active first as a soldier in Gaul, then, as a baptized Christian, in Amiens and Poitiers, later in Milan, on the island of Gallinaria near Genoa, back home in Hungary, and finally, as founder of a monastery and abbot in Tours. A full, European life with more to it than a goose and the popular story of his cloak which he cut in half to clothe an almost naked beggar.

St Martin (316–397), Bishop of Tours, cutting up his cloak for a beggar. Hungarian panel, c. 1490.

When Sulpicius Severus chooses this man as his example of a Europe which can be determined not merely geographically, but also spiritually and pragmatically, he has a programme and a message: No political concept, not even that of Constantine and his Christian successors, can function successfully without active charity, the selfless service to those in need. A harmonious and European present as well as future depends on us living with each other and for each other, regardless of national boundaries or origins. And there have indeed been helpful examples of this in the past.

Where the nobility of faith is in force, there is no difference between barbarians and Greeks, between strangers and citizens – in their dignity, they all are on the same level.

JOHN CHRYSOSTOM,
COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS, C. AD 386

We move towards God not by walking, but by loving. Not our feet but our moral character carries us nearer to him. Moral character is assessed not by what a man knows, but what he loves.

AUGUSTINE,
LETTERS, C. AD 390

It is characteristic that the classical convention remained overwhelmingly powerful in poetry and history. Even in the time of Justinian the two principal historians of the age, Procopius of Cesarea and Agathias, still wrote as if Christianity were a phenomenon which they were almost embarrassed to mention and could only discuss in circumlocutions.

HENRY CHADWICK,
THE EARLY CHURCH, 1967

St. Augustine (354–430), Bishop of Hippo Regius in northern Africa (modern Bône in Algeria), Latin Church Father, shown at a lecture in Rome. Painting by Benozzo Gozzoli in the church of San Agostino, San Gimignano, Tuscany, 1465.

Rules and Regulations, and Lots of Common Sense

East and West, Constantinople and York, Hungary and France: Seemingly insurmountable opposites which had been overcome by inspirational actions. After Constantine, a question of continuing importance remained: Would it be possible to make a legal framework for what had been achieved, would it be possible to make such concepts binding, applying the legacy of Greek and Roman history and culture to present tasks and future prospects? As a matter of fact, theologians did try their hand at it. For example, there was Augustine, one of the great inspirers of the West, to whom even someone like Martin Luther owed many insights. Augustine wrote his masterpiece, the "City of God", at the very moment when the old certainties appeared to have collapsed. In AD 413, West and East were smarting under a catastrophe: Three years before, Rome had been conquered by Alaric, the king of the Visigoths. Rome conquered: In far away Jerusalem, Jerome wept bitter tears, and the old nobility blamed the Christians for their defeat: their removal of the traditional Roman values had caused – or so they thought – the downfall of the city of cities.

It took a man from North Africa, Augustine, to develop a workable concept to combat this mood of doom and gloom – the idea of the "two realms": The State of God and the earthly, secular State are two separate entities, the two realms

which cannot be clearly separated in the course of world history. They influence each other, and this mutually permeating influence is part of the real world in which we live. Only much later, Augustine taught, beyond the reach of living men, at the time of the 'last judgment', will the final separation of these two realms come about. A very practical, very political concept – and indeed, the model of the "two realms" has shaped medieval and modern European politics and theology and was, among other things, instrumental in preventing a swift, efficient Christian resistance against the tyranny of the Nazis.

In any case, Augustine's sense of justice was both pragmatic and modern. The State has a purpose: to create, to guarantee and to preserve peace and social order. The prerequisite: justice (in Latin: 'iustitia'). And justice has to ensure a fair distribution of goods. Wherever this 'iustitia' is lacking, there can be no peace either. And a State that neither provides nor possesses peace, is doomed to perdition, sooner or later. Augustine adds two further categories: A State which expands its territory by means of conquest violates the principle of justice and becomes "a community of robbers". Obviously, much of the colonial history of Europe contradicts these early insights. And, equally uncomfortable perhaps, at least to some politicians: The State is called upon to provide moral guidelines.

One hundred years after Augustine, a truly political realist, Emperor Justinian, tried to draw together the separate powers of practical politics and ethical obligations. He produced a compendium and continuation of classical law, the 'Corpus iuris civilis', the 'Body of Civil Law', which was published between AD 528 and 534. Ever since, it has remained a firm component – be it consciously or, occasionally, in an unconscious, indirect form – of legal and law-orientated European ideals. Justinian and his colleagues collected the sources and texts of every single aspect of ancient and contemporary law. Finally, they provided a harmonized, clearly structured, four-part compendium which was meant to be binding for the whole empire.

It took them seven years, and in the end, a solid basis was laid for a legal unification of the empire. However, by that time the political process of dissolution of the Roman Empire was well underway. The Western Roman world had come to an end in AD 476, the new Europe of Charlemagne was still two and a half centuries away, and in the East, an increasing awareness of its glorious past had begun to permeate all aspects of culture: as a consequence, Greek displaced Latin from its traditional rank as a language of equal

Justinian I (487–565); Byzantine emperor. Gold medaillion, 534.

"Major speeches against political abuses and unpopular governors were, of course, rare events. The day-to-day politics of the provinces, rather, took place in a fine dust of ancient phrases that settled heavily, in the form of eulogy, petitions, and advice, on the main protagonists – the governors. Faced by what was often an insecure situation, where their continued popularity with influential groups of local notables was essential for their survival, late Roman governors had every reason to wish their actions to be perceived against a golden haze of old-world values. Appeals to the ideal of a harmonious, because persuasive, style of rule were frequent."

PETER BROWN, POWER AND PERSUASION IN LATE ANTIQUITY. TOWARDS A CHRISTIAN EMPIRE, 1992

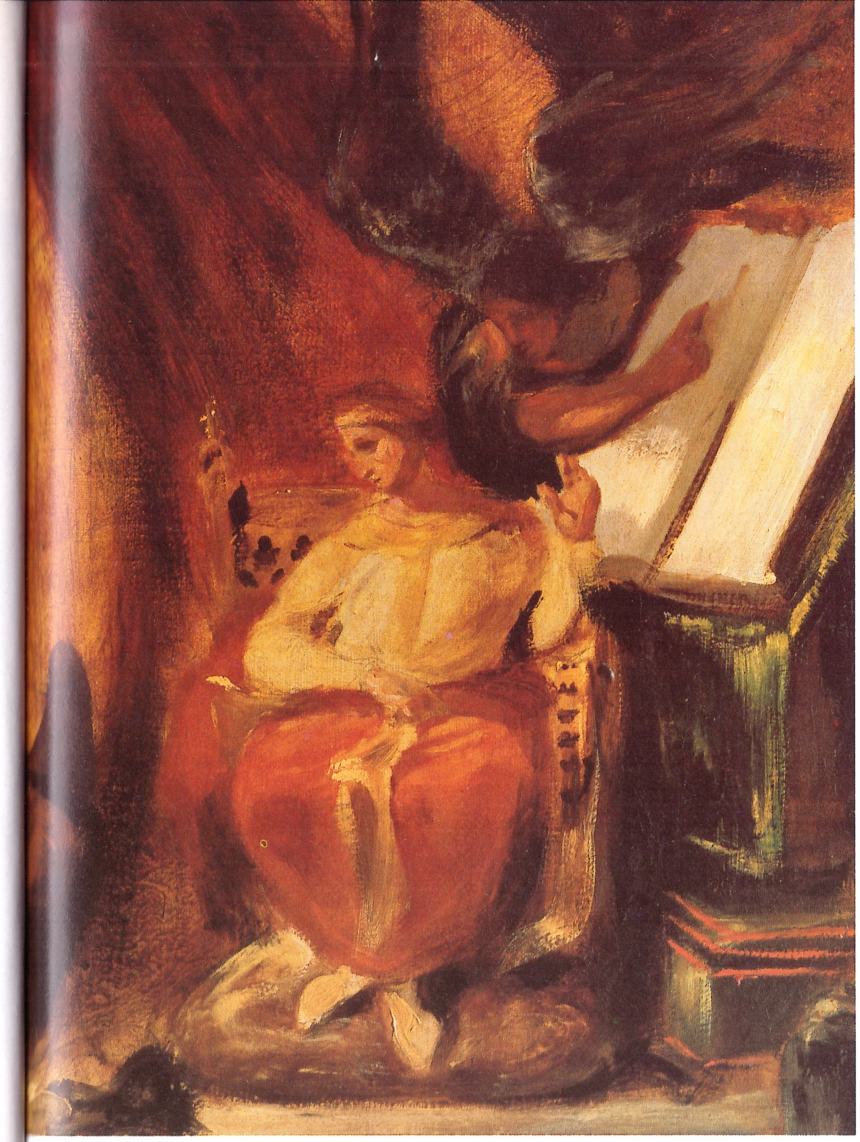
Codex Iustinianus: The "Corpus iurius civilis", printed by J. Sensenschmidt and A. Frisner in Nuremberg, 1475, beginning of the sixth book, "On fugitive slaves".

status. Why should this matter? It mattered because Justinian's 'Corpus iuris civilis' had been compiled in Latin. Thus, at the very moment when a unifying body of legal yardsticks had finally been completed, its dissemination in the East was hindered by the the simple fact that Latin was no longer regarded as an official language. And on the other side of the Mediterranean, in the West, the binding nature of the 'Corpus' depended occasionally on passing military reconquests which Justinian managed to stage from his own eastern strongholds. But whatever its fleeting success in its own time, Justininan's 'Corpus' became the single most influential collection of laws and legal paradigms in the Middle Ages; without it, European law – and this includes modern derivations – would not have been possible.

Above all, we owe its continuous importance and influence, and its almost legendary renown in international, European legal history and practise to the Faculty of Law at the University of Bologna – the oldest European university, established in 1119. At Bologna, the complete text was properly edited and disseminated to all those new universities which began to grow like mushrooms all over Europe. And through the universities, the text became part of European Canon Law, and reached the legal precincts of the national states. Understandably, the impact differed from country to country. In Germany, for example, it was much more tangible than in England or France. But throughout Europe, it could be seen as a point of reference

"No wise man would prefer to be in exile, poor and disgraced, rather than to flourish in his own city, wealthy and powerful, respected for his honours. For the office of wisdom is practised in a more notable and manifest way when the happiness of the rulers is in some way transferred to the people at large. Conversely, prison and the other consequences of legal punishment are due to pernicious citizens, for whom they were after all established."

BOETHIUS,
THE CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY,
C. AD 524



Emperor Justinian I as legislator. Painting by Eugène Delacroix, 1826. Justinian, emperor of the Eastern Empire, initiated the collection and codification of Roman Law. His „Corpus Iuris Civilisis" influenced legal systems throughout Europe until well into the modern age.

for all those who insisted that the quest for binding values and signposts was not restricted to the precepts of religion and philosophy. We may doubt whether a collection of laws and regulations could or should play the pivotal role which Justinian had envisaged – but the following ruling does at any rate demonstrate quite a pleasant aspect of the insight into the fact that human law is not above divine law: "All legal dealings, whether private or public, must rest during the fifteen days of Eastertide."

Charlemagne and the new Europe: The Middle Ages become modern, foundations for the future are laid, and foreigners are no longer unwelcome aliens.

IV. The Youth of the Middle Ages and the First Europe

The modern research which has retrieved his memory and broadened his appeal, has in its own strict discipline tended to minimise the evangelistic side of Boniface's achievement and to exalt instead his function in the foundation of medieval Europe as a whole. There is no need, however, for one aspect to detract from the other.

JOHN CYRIL SLADDEN,
BONIFACE OF DEVON. APOSTLE OF GERMANY, 1980

As the Normans kept attacking and devastating the Gallic and Germanic coasts, Charles posted guards in every port and at the major, navigable estuaries and thus prevented the landing and the pillaging of the enemy. He took the same precautions against the Moors in the south, who had specialized in piracy at the time, along the coasts of the Provence, between the Pyrenees and the Cevennes and along Italy down to Rome.

EINHARD,
LIFE OF CHARLEMAGNE, C. 833

Top: St Boniface and the Apostles St Paul, St Peter, and other saints, with the crucified Christ in the centre. Portable altar, Hildesheim, c. 1130.

Left: St Boniface of Crediton, called "Apostle of the Germans", Chalk lithograph by Theodor Hosemann, 1850.

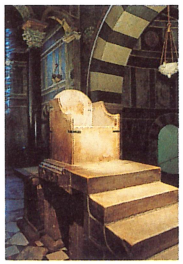
A Triangle as the Squaring of the Circle? Aachen, Magdeburg, and Rome

„And thus it happened that the reputation of his preaching spread everywhere, and that his fame was proclaimed in the greater part of Europe." This man is Boniface from Crediton in England, the "Apostle of the Germans", murdered by a band of Frisian brigands in 754. Willibald, his biographer, praises the truly remarkable achievements of his teacher and friend. Boniface, the educator and missionary, has been described as one of the founding fathers of our European society. And this is no partisan exaggeration – it is the sober verdict of modern historians. Those so-called Dark Ages which brought forth the likes of Boniface, were in fact a fascinating mixture of cross-cultural influences and events. There was unrest, the collapse of the old political order, the advance of a new religious and political power, Islam, and there were highly educated men and women, preserving the roots, learning from others, building bridges, linking the old with

Emperor Charlemagne ("Karolus Magnus"), 742–814, in full regalia, by Albrecht Dürer, 1512.

the new. Christian missionaries did not just preach the gospel, they taught and spread literature, art, cultural values, and, quite fundamentally, the ability to read and write.

At this stage, Europe appears increasingly on the political and social agenda, as a term to describe the peoples and nations who co-existed in the western half of the Roman Empire. And step by step, the term begins to be used even for regions to the east of the old Roman "Limes". In the year of Boniface's death, 754, the 'Mozarabic Chronicle' is published, an historical work which tells the story of Charles Martel's victory over the Arabs at Poitiers, on French soil. This crucial battle of 732 had forced the Christian nations of Europe to unite, and the chronicler manages to describe the conflict in such a way that we see the Europeans as a community of peoples and states who defend themselves unanimously and successfully against a foreign, alien intruder. And there is a name for the unifying element – the Chronicle calls it "the Cross of Christ". But the battle between the Europeans and the Arabs at Poitiers was not really a religious war, even though the attackers carried the standards of their prophet, Mohammed. To the European defenders, it was much more important to differentiate between "insiders" and "outsiders", between those who belonged and those who did not. As a consequence, defensive battles were not left to the regional peoples who happened to be under immediate threat. All available forces were joined in a concerted action.



Imperial throne of Charlemagne, Chapel of the Palatinate at Aachen.

Battle at Tours, 732. Charles Martel defeats Abd al-Rachman, the Caliph's governor in Spain. By Jacques de Breville (1858–1931).

As so often in history, a bond was not created by the unifying strength of insights or convictions – even the cross of Christ did not play that role – , but by an existential threat from outside. Only then, while the bond was being formed,

The extension of the Franconian Empire during the reign of Charlemagne.

was there a growing awareness of other, common values which were an essential part of a unity that was meant to last. We can see how right and how important this still is, by looking at our most recent European history after the collapse of the Soviet empire. All of a sudden, almost overnight, the enormous threat which had kept the Western Alliance together, an alliance built on the premise of defense against a military superpower, had ceased to exist.

Today, this void has to be filled constructively, by a new definition of the Alliance itself. And this includes the continuous debate over an invitation of the old foe into the fold.

Certainly, it was never enough to define one's position of togetherness in form of a defensive "we in here" – " you out there". The inherent dangers of such a front line had already been realized by the first ruler of post-Roman Europe, by the Franconian King Charles whom historians were to call Charlemagne.

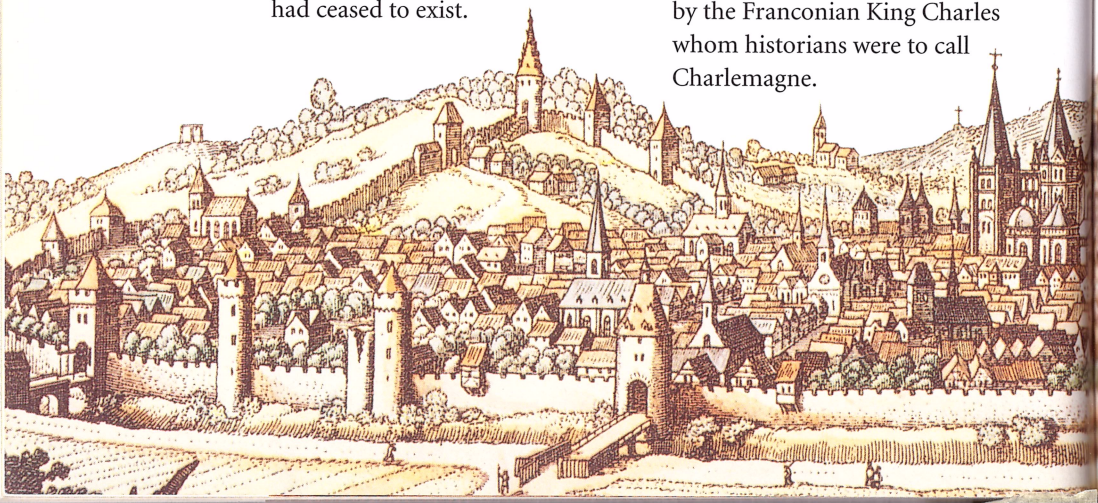
His closest adviser, the Anglo-Saxon Alcuin, described Europe as "the continent of the Christian faith". But this was expressly not meant to exclude, ignore, despise or fight other peoples and nations outside this continent. Nor did it mean that only Christian convictions were valid. In fact, Alcuin favoured the development of "a new Athens" in the Franconian heart of Europe, and the ideal library which he had devised at York, before he joined Charlemagne, also included the great Greek and Latin classics and a whole wealth of non-Christian literature.

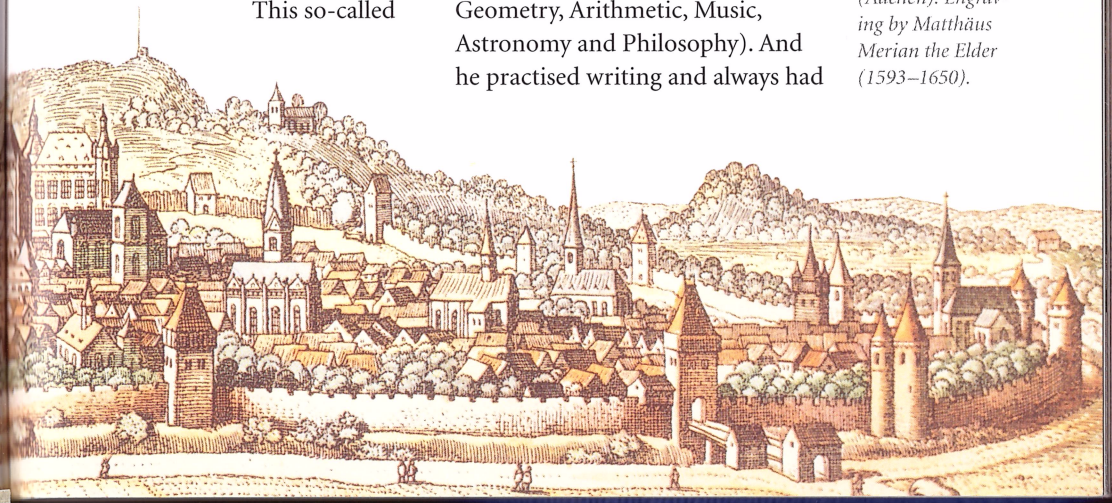
From his central residence at Aachen, and from his many other Palatinates like Paderborn, where he met Pope Leo III in 799 and discussed with him his coronation as the first emperor of the Holy Roman Empire which took place in Rome the following year, Charlemagne succeeded in setting up an educational system which was shaped by international influences and could be called truly European.

This so-called Carolingian Renaissance was a combination of conservative and innovative elements, of stimulating and creative impulses, which laid the foundations for a future Europe. Indeed, the cultural and intellectual wealth of modern Europe would be unthinkable without the Carolingians.

Harun al-Rashid (763–809), Abbasid Caliph.

And Charlemagne himself? Here was a man who never learned to write fluently, perhaps, as his biographer Einhard speculates, because he began too late, or because he just had more than enough scribes and secretaries at his court. It did not matter: He tried to exemplify a European life in a multinational, multiracial empire. "He spoke not only his own native tongue," Einhard tells us, "but made a great effort to learn foreign languages. He spoke Latin as well as his own language, and he knew Greek, although he understood it better than he spoke it. With great fervour, he studied and practised the arts (and that was, at the time: Grammar with Literature, Dialectics, Rhetorics, Geometry, Arithmetic, Music, Astronomy and Philosophy). And he practised writing and always had





Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen). Engraving by Matthäus Merian the Elder (1593–1650).

a writing tablet and sheets under his pillow so that he could practise his hand in sleepless hours." Eager to improve his own standards, Charlemagne encouraged others and found cultured friends even outside Europe. In the Holy Land, for example, he supported the Christian minority not by fighting the Muslims as mortal enemies, but by developing a trustful relationship with Harun al-Rashid, the famous caliph whose deeds have been immortalized in the stories of the Arabian Nights. According to Einhard, Harun entrusted Charlemagne with the oversight of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

Such peaceful contacts with the Arabs, and with Muslim culture, were to remain important for Europe in later centuries, in spite of religious and military conflicts. Arabic numerals and countless facets of Arabic art and architecture, can be found in our everyday world; and behind the scenes of general knowledge, we discover that important roads of medicine and philosophy crossed the bridge from the Arabic world to European society. There was Ibn Sinna from Buchara, called Avicenna (980–1037) who wrote a canon of medical knowledge which was a definitive text everywhere in medieval Europe. Or take Ibn Rushd from Córdoba, better known as Averroes (1126–1196) who taught the "twofold truth" of knowledge and faith and who passed the works

The Baptism of Germanic tribes and the martyrdom of St Boniface. Illumination, Fulda, 975.

of Aristotle – and with him those of Platonic philosophy – on to a western Europe which had lost almost all knowledge of these writings. In fact, the impressive erudition of the High Middle Ages which culminated in the philosophical and theological system of St Thomas Aquinas would hardly have been possible without the excellent groundwork done and promulgated by thinkers like Averroes and Avicenna.

As a statesman, Charlemagne tried to form good diplomatic and personal relations with the rulers of other realms. His violent streak became apparent at his own inner-European doorstep, in his attempts to integrate independent, anti-Franconian peoples into his empire. The subjugation and the forcible Christianization of the Saxons casts a shadow on Charlemagne's politics. This remains regrettable in spite of the fact that the Saxons had in turn done everything to challenge him and had interpreted the conflict as the question as to whose was the more powerful God. When the God of Charlemagne had won, Widukind, the Saxon leader, submitted and was baptized.

The universal Christian idea of the realm which Charlemagne developed not least with the help of the Church and particularly with the support of the Pope in Rome who enjoyed his imperial protection, outlasted the gradual dissolution of his empire after his death in 814. One town may serve as an example of the European continuum which prevailed in the following centuries: Magdeburg, a place which had previously been a border town in the East, at a busy intersection of international trade routes. Emperor Otto I, married to a British lady, Editha, rebuilt the town, and in 968, he made it an archbishopric with its first cathedral where his tomb was recently discovered by archaeologists. Why Magdeburg? For strategical reasons: The emperor, who had established the unity of his fragmented realm by military means and who had established excellent contacts with the eastern, Byzantine Empire by marrying his son to the intelligent, sophisticated Byzantine princess Theophanu, now wished to take the concept of "Europe" to the East and to the North as well. Magdeburg, that Carolingian border town, became a strategic centre. New eastern bishoprics, with their schools, their monasteries and scribal centres – Brandenburg, Havelburg, Meissen, Merseburg, later Posen and Lebus, could be

"Otto the Great throws his spear into the Baltic Sea at the northern coast of Jutland to mark the borders of his realm (948)". Wood engraving after a painting by Albert Baur (1835–1906).

directed from such a centre. And missionary activities in Scandinavia, from branches like Aarhus, Ripen and Schleswig in the south, could be supported from the "traffic junction" which was Magdeburg. Otto's plans came to grief in the next generation, through the rebellions of the Danes and the Slavs: as we realize with the benefit of hindsight, the idea of the European Christian realm had been enforced upon the eastern peoples too quickly, from above rather than in a processs of cooperation, and, above all, with no consideration for the cultural characteristics of the northern and easternmost peoples. But two generations later, in the 11th century, the grandson of Otto I, Otto III, was more skilful. He opened up a way and succeeded in renewing the "Holy Roman Empire" on European soil. His achievement became proverbial as the "renovatio imperii", the renewal of the empire. Otto even considered reestablishing Rome, once again, as the capital. And at long last, the Poles and the Hungarians were included – not as a result of conquest and submission, but by treaties and through the establishment of important bishoprics in Gnesen (Gniezno) and Gran (Esztergom). Basically, strength of partner was seen as a strengthening of the partnership, to the common good. We may not yet call this a federalistic Europe, but it was, in any case, a functioning precedent for the model of Europe as a community of flourishing countries – the "Europe des patries", the Europe of the fatherlands.

Otto III (980–1002), German Emperor of the Roman Empire. Undated etching, Frankfurt am Main.

"Strong in war,
Full of strength in peace,
but moderate in both,
in winning,
in war and peace,
he always cared
for his poor.
Thus he is called
Father of the Poor."

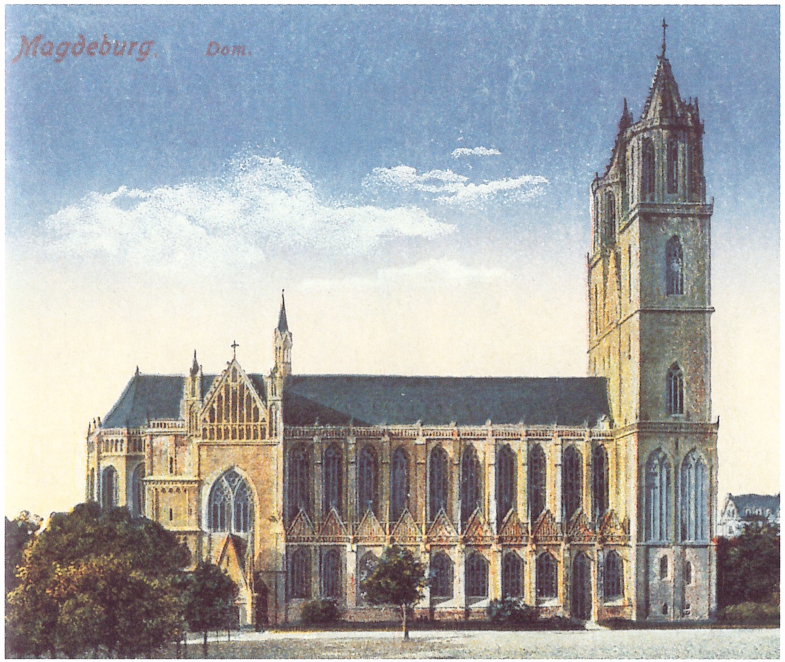
'Modus Ottine' from the Carmina Cantabrigiensia, on Emperor Otto III, c. 1050 (Latin original on p. 163)

During the Ottonian Era, the general open-mindedness towards the Greeks was perhaps the highest in the occidental Middle Ages; it was high enough to be felt by the Greek as an invitation to stay.

WALTER BERSCHIN,
GRIECHISCH-LATEINISCHES MITTELALTER, 1980

The art of the 11th century expressed the people's hopes. The world which can be caught by the eye is narrow, deceptive, transitory and frail. The Christianity of the High Church was trying to free the people from it. Thus, Christian art did not attempt to express a reality which can be experienced. But it is not abstract either. The artist draws his intuition from natural forms. But he purifies them. He subjects them to a purification which permits them to be established in the glory of the time to come.

GEORGES DUBY,
LE TEMPS DES CATHÉDRALES. L'ART ET LA SOCIÉTÉ 980-1420, 1976



Magdeburg Cathedral, built between 1209 and 1363. spires c. 1520. Coloured postcard, c. 1910.

Learning from each other: A Black Patron Saint and Greek Masterbuilders

In the cathedral of Magdeburg, not far from the choir, there is and has been since 1249 the statue of the city's patron saint. This in itself would hardly be remarkable, for, after all, this is quite common in a European cathedral. However, in this case, the saint's name is Maurice – the man who gave his name to the island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean which is famous not least among stamp collectors. He was the commanding officer of the Theban Legion, a unit recruited from Christian Egyptians. In AD 287, and near a place today called St Maurice in the Swiss Valais, his legion refused to obey an order given by Emperor Maximian, that the men were to pray and to sacrifice to the pagan Gods for victory over the rebellious Gauls, and to butcher the rebels, many of whom were Christians. The Legion refused to obey; Maurice and many others were executed.

The emperor had demanded more than these loyal Christian soldiers were able to give, and their resistance against the authority of the emperor made Maurice and his companions instantly popular all over Europe. Soldiers in particular venerated him, and he still is the patron saint of the Vatican's Swiss

"St Maurice receives St Erasmus". Painting by Matthias Grünewald, c. 1517.

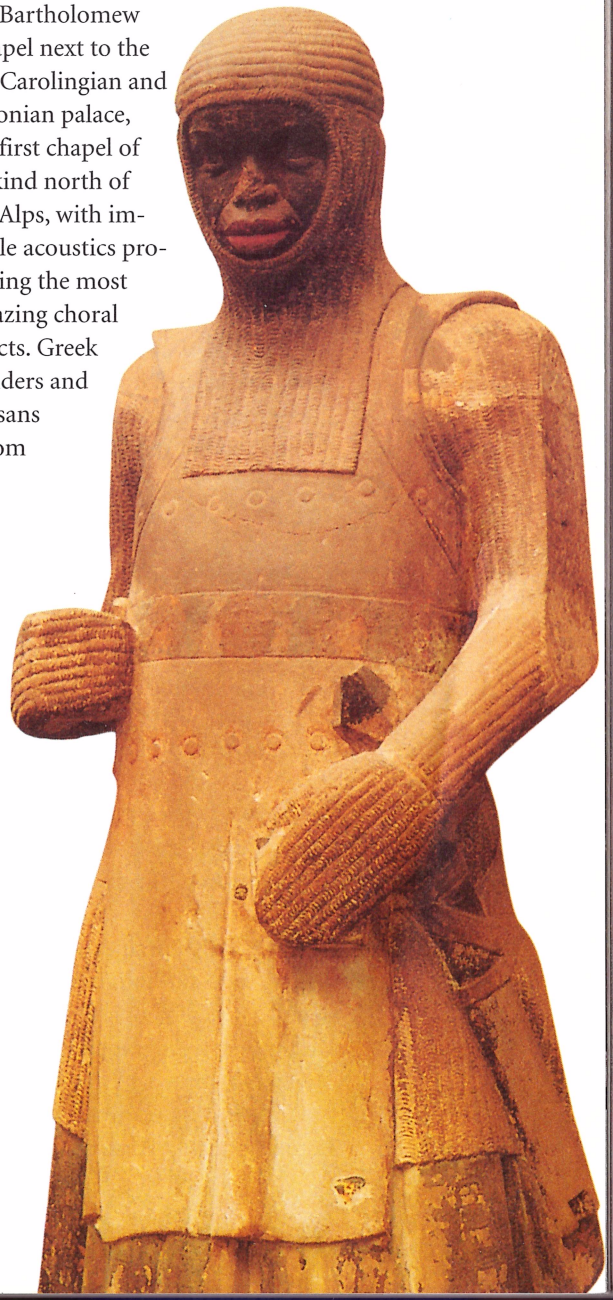
Guard. But none of all this makes the choice of an Egyptian who died in Switzerland as the saint of a city in the northeast of the empire so conspicuous. The really amazing aspect of his presence in Magdeburg Cathedral is the unbiased decision of the sculptor – and his patrons – to portray him, in 1240, as an archetypal, thick-lipped negro. No trace here of racial prejudice or, conversely, of "political correctness". This genuine directness is truly impressive. It was, after all, at this place and at this time, an expression of devout veneration. We should feel ashamed that some modern Europeans have not kept up these unprejudiced standards and regard immigrants or refugees as intruders and objects of abuse.

There are many more examples to be found of an open and open-minded Europe which grew out of a concrete idea of the empire, in art, in architecture, in literature. In Paderborn for example, where the Pope had encouraged and supported Charlemagne's concept of a reunited central Europe in 799, a unique building still exemplifies the unquestioned normality of cross-cultural relations: It is the Bartholomew Chapel next to the old Carolingian and Ottonian palace, the first chapel of its kind north of the Alps, with imitable acoustics producing the most amazing choral effects. Greek builders and artisans whom

"Candidus, Mauricius,
Brightly shining, Maurice,
Exsuperius, Innocentius,
Excellent, Innocent"

SCHOOL OF
NOTKER OF ST. GALL,
ON ST MAURICE, C. 900

Statue of St Maurice in Magdeburg Cathedral, c. 1250.



St Anselm (1033–1109). Born in Aosta, modern Italy, he moved to France and lived as a monk and prior in Burgundy and Normandy. In 1073, he became Archbishop of Canterbury in Britain.

the bishop had invited for this purpose, constructed it in 1017. At the former Carolingian frontier between East and West, the art of the southwest, the heritage of Byzantine craftsmanship, became visible. At a place where not long ago the Christian Franks and the pagan Saxons had fought deadly battles, a symbol of the cultural variety of Europe came into being. To put it differently, Greeks were living among Westfalians, continued to speak their language, had their own customs, practised their own traditional form of the Christian faith and went about their work.

A Christian perspective, secular skills, a welcome and fulfilled togetherness of people who were strangers in a geographical sense but fellow workers toward a common ideal: this, too, was and is European reality. Anselm, a Lombard who was Archbishop of Canterbury in far-away Britain, from 1093 to 1109, put this into his own words when he linked faith in God with philosophical concepts and the experience of everyday reality: "Nothing is commonly understood as good, unless it has some practical use, as for example health and everything that goes with it, are called good. Or it is regarded as good because it radiates dignity, for example the beautiful and what supports it are seen as good." Thus, according to Anselm of Canterbury, through the visible, the tangible, and the good with their exemplary qualities, even God can be experienced, in spite of the never-ending imperfections and errors of human efforts. But there is more than that: All men, regardless of their origins, can share this insight and can live it – with each other.

That step from the simple formulation of such basic conclusions to the practical reality of life in society was one of the foundations of modern Europe.

Right: The Bartholomew Chapel in Paderborn, c. 1017.

Learning from mistakes: European expansion leads to false paths and to self-correction, and to a new awareness of the worth and dignity of all people, to the recognition of human rights.

V. Europe exports itself

Christopher Columbus (1451–1506), seafarer and discoverer.

In every street and square of the city, mounds of heads, hands and feet could be seen. People were walking openly over dead men and horses. If I described everything I saw in detail, you would not believe me. What a suitable punishment: The place which had endured for so long the blasphemies against God was now covered by the blood of the blasphemers. After the capture of the city, it was a rewarding sight when the pilgrims assembled at the Holy Sepulchre, in deep devotion, clapping their hands in exultation, and singing a new song to the Lord.

RAYMOND OF AGUILERS,
EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT OF THE FALL OF JERUSALEM, 15 JULY 1099

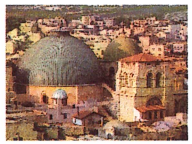
As an annexe to the church of St John, there is a hospital which gathers, in its different buildings, a considerable number of weak and sick people, nurses them and restores them to health. At the time when I was there, the number of patients was about 2000. More and more were added to that number, and besides, the hospital maintains twice as many people outside with food.

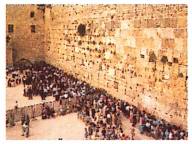
JOHN OF WUERZBURG,
REPORT ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES OF THE EUROPEAN KNIGHTS
OF ST JOHN IN JERUSALEM, 1170

A crusader returning home, by Carl Friedrich Lessing, 1835, depicting a sense of futility and guilt.

Light and Shade in Jerusalem

„And so they continued their journey, some going towards Mainz, others to Piacenza, and yet others even to Rome. Others reached Marseille, but whether they took a ship or what happened to them afterwards, we do not know. This much is certain: of the thousands who had set off, only very few returned." Words from an old chronicle of the "Childrens' Crusade" of 1212. By that date, European armies had been in the Holy Land no fewer than four times, always trying to rescue the Christian sites from the Muslims. Crusader kingdoms had been established, but they did not last. And now, in 1212, children – as it were, the innocent and defenseless, were trying to reconquer the Tomb of Christ. A bizarre idea, difficult to understand from our modern perspective, but thousands of children from France, Germany and Italy, unhindered by their parents, began their journey, led in two "armies" by the ten-year-old Nikolaus of Cologne and the hardly older Étienne from the Vendôme. The very few who reached the ports of Brindisi and Marseille and mana-





Top: The Muristan Quarter in the old town of Jerusalem, site of the first hospital of the Order of St John, c. 1099. In the background, the German Protestant Church of the Redeemer, financed by Emperor Wilhelm II.

Centre: The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem.

Bottom: The Western (or 'Wailing') Wall, a remnant of the Second Temple in Jerusalem which was destroyed by the Romans in AD 70.

ged to cross the Mediterranean, perished in shipwrecks or were captured and sold into slavery.

Fanaticism? Misguided superstition? It remains an historical fact that the idea of the Crusades was, for more than two centuries, one of the uniting points of reference which could be conjured up by committed Europeans. It was, after all, not just about the authority of the Church, the prowess of knights or the simple faith of the Christian masses. There were solid economical interests involved – the protection of trade routes, growing markets for export and import, political questions of spheres of influence and their boundaries. Everyone was hoping to profit: The Byzantines in the southeast of Europe expected military help from the West in their struggle against the Turkish Seljuks and found their ally in Pope Urban II who in turn recruited the emperor and the French king. The merchants at the mediterranean ports who were seeking both protection and expansion, expected stable conditions. And the Pope himself did not intend to offer the Byzantines just unconditional help – he hoped to achieve the goal of reunification of all Christian Churches under the supremacy of Rome. And for the broad mass of princes, knights and their liegemen, there was the expectation of booty from the legendary coffers of the Arabs. But there also was sincere

Christian devotion: To quite a few of them, the thought of standing at the Tomb of Christ which the fanatic Caliph al-Hakim had almost completely destroyed, was a decisive motive for undertaking the journey and suffering its hardships.

But what means are justified by such ends? When the Christian troops conquered Jerusalem for the first time, on the 15th July 1099, they massacred the population – Jews, Muslims, even some Christians – in an unprecedented orgy of violence. It destroyed Christian and European credibility in the Holy Land for a very long time to come. And yet, even in such moments of madness, there were others who acted differently: Some of the knights looked after the wounded on both sides and cared for the victims in a hospice-cum-hospital which had been in Jerusalem's centre, the "Muristan" quarter, since 603. Charlemagne had once extended it, with Harun al-Rashid's permission, and after the destruction by the mentally deranged Caliph al-Hakim, merchants from the Italian maritime republic of Amalfi had reconstructed it. A man called Gerard assembled the knights who were committed to practising neighbourly love, and with funds donated by the Crusaders' commander, Geoffrey of Bouillon, they established an independent hospital. The lay brothers around Gerard and knights from the crusading countries created an

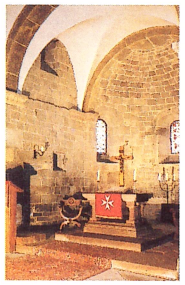
Left: Miniature from a French Crusaders' manuscript, 12th century.

A Knight of the Order of St John in medieval attire.

institution which saw its most solemn duty in the care for the injured, the sick, the homeless, regardless of their origin, rank or means. From such beginnings, the "Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem" arose, today known as the Order of St John or, in its Roman-Catholic form, the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. Their sign, the eight-pointed cross, often known as the Maltese Cross, originally was the crest of the Republic of Amalfi. Today, it is seen as symbolizing the eight beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount.

Throughout the ensuing crusades, when knights of the new order had to provide armed contingents, build fortresses and distinguish themselves by their valour, the setting-up of hospitals remained a paramount task, first in the Holy Land, then in Europe itself, mainly along the pilgrimage and trade routes. Eight European 'nations' joined forces – Aragon, the Auvergne, Castille, England, France, Germany, Italy, and Provence. In 1181, Roger de Molins gave a proper charter to the Jerusalem Hospital, and it exemplifies the circumspect medical provisions which were quite unusual at the time. For example, we read: "Secondly, we decide that there must be four learned and wise doctors at the hospital; thirdly, we decree that the beds of the sick must be built in such a length and width that they can find rest in them, and that every bed is supplied with its own sheet; fourthly, we command that every patient in the hospital has a fur to put on, two felt shoes and a cap from sheep's wool. Furthermore, we lay down that cots must be provided for women who give birth in great poverty, so that they may lie separated from their babies and the babies will not be infected by their mothers." Spiritual and pastoral care was also provided, and the helpers were constantly reminded that they were not to act as masters, but as servants: "The nurses must serve the patients everywhere in Christendom where we have a hospital, with a pure heart and they must completely satisfy their needs uncomplainingly and without contradiction, and they must bear everything in this spirit. For this, they will receive their reward from God."

Thus, out of the experience of the murderous cruelties of a Crusade, active charity was born throughout Europe. And from those origins developed a system of organizations, hospitals, clinics, homes and hospices which has remained a prime example of the European spirit. Remarkably, it is a side of Europe which has been emulated on other continents and by non-Christian civilizations.



Interior of the Commandery Chapel of the Order of St John at Nieder-Weisel, Germany, c. 1245.

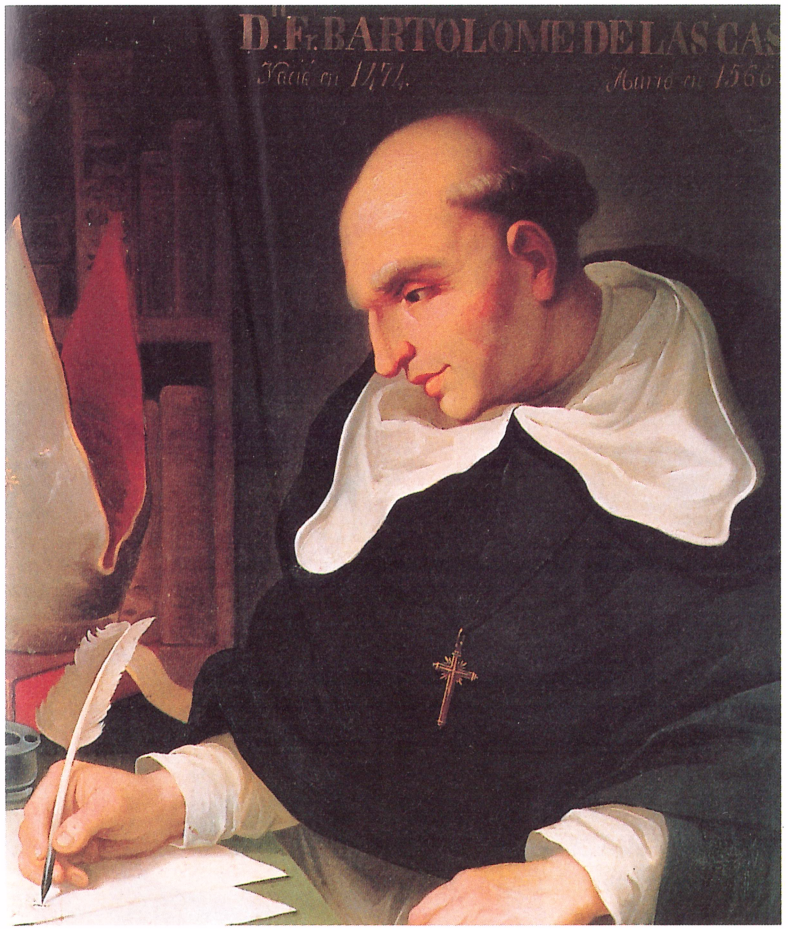
The Second Crusade (1147–1149). The German King Konrad III led the crusade on the instigation of the French mystic Bernard of Clairvaux, after the reconquest of Edessa by Islamic troops. The armies of Konrad and the French King Louis VII were beaten in three battles; after the defeat at Damascus, the crusade had to be abandoned. Miniature from the 'Grandes Chroniques de France' by Jehan Foucquet, 1472.

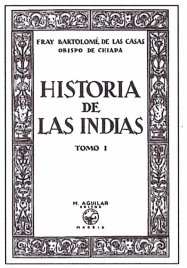
And when I approached a country, they all fled from me. So I always showed myself generous and gave them what good things I carried with me. In this way, I got them to talk to me. And since I treated them like this, they lost their mistrust. ... Nor did I find among them any form of unbelief or idolatry; they believed that all Good is in heaven, and they were absolutely convinced that I had come from heaven, with my ship and my crew. ... They are, however, endowed with trained and subtle reason, and there are people who can navigate on the sea so masterly that it looks like a miracle. And they can answer sensibly to every question one may ask them.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS,
ACCOUNT TO KING FERDINAND OF HIS VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY, 1492

He who fails to fulfill the highest duty bears the heaviest guilt. Therefore God's anger will fall upon this land. He will shatter its power and lower its sceptre, and take away its islands and possessions. And if those who rise from the ruins accuse the Lord and ask why he has brought this misery upon the land, I shall rise from the tomb to justify to God's justice. I will answer the accusers. God called upon your fathers to perform a great mission and they closed their hearts and would not heed him. Like unto the Saint, they should have carried the Lord across the sea on their shoulders, but they carried Satan instead. God does right if he destroys the might of this land. Terrible punishment follows terrible crime.

REINHOLD SCHNEIDER,
LAS CASAS VOR KARL V. (IMPERIAL MISSION), 1938





Bartolomé de las Casas (1477–1566), Spanish monk and historian, called Apostle of the Indians in Central America, and author of a 'History of the Indies'.

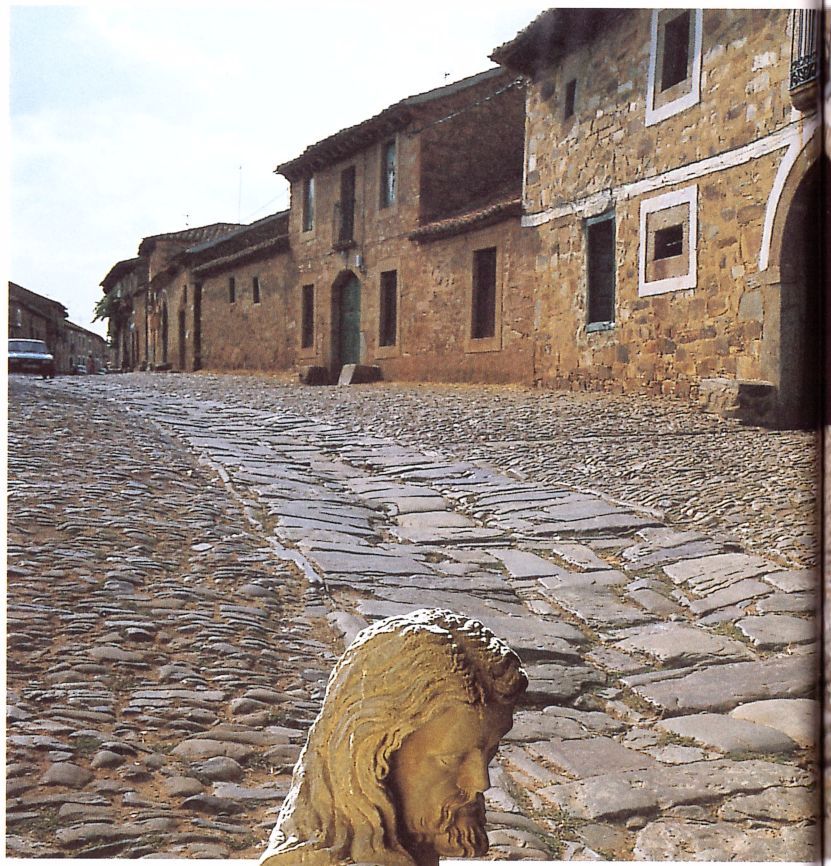
Columbus and Bartolomé de las Casas, or: The Roots of Human Rights

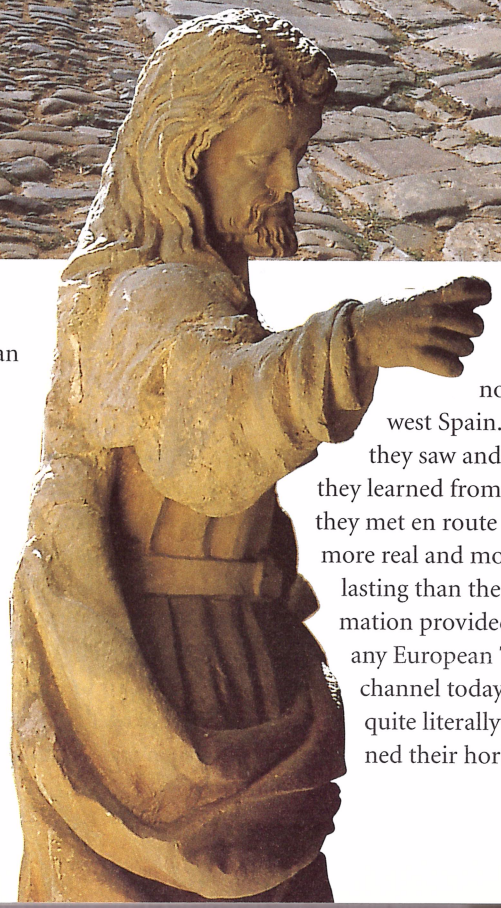
Evidently, medieval Europe did not owe the emergence of joint activities merely to the decisions of emperors, kings or chancelleries. Individuals took action, convincing others, and eventually even the authorities, to follow suit. There was never a lack of opportunities, and these opportunities were never confined to the networks of the privileged and ruling classes. Examples abound: Exporters and travelling salesmen could easily stay in touch with the world of northeastern Europe, by using the trade links of the Hanseatic League, to Bergen in Norway or Riga in the Baltic, or to Russian Novgorod. City-dwellers and peasants, workmen and clerics, they all could and

Top: Pilgrim on his way to the tomb of St James at Santiago de Compostela in Spain. 19th century drawing.

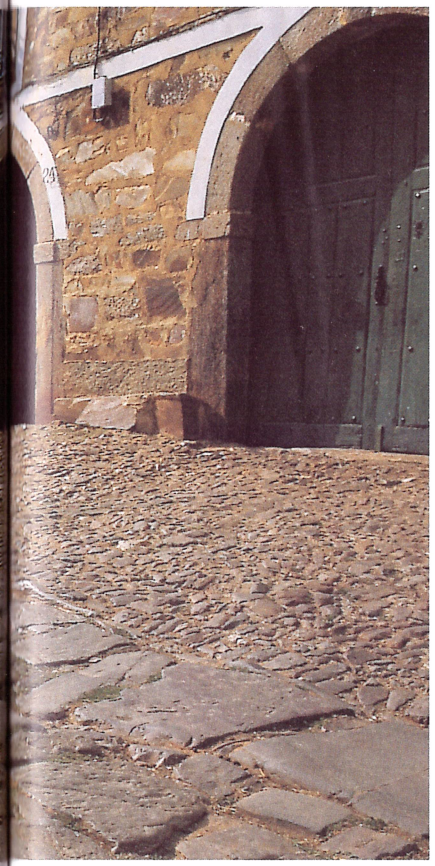
Centre: Medieval pavement on the pilgrims' road, at Castrillo de los Polvares in Spain.

Bottom: Statue of Christ in the arcade of the cloister at the Cathedral of León, Spain.





did imbibe the variety of European culture, nation by nation, region by region, and they came from England, or Holland, France or Germany, and met on the perennially popular pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in north-west Spain. What they saw and what they learned from those they met en route was more real and more lasting than the information provided by any European TV channel today. They quite literally widened their horizons.



Venice: Piazza di San Marco and Canale della Giudecca.

Kempe (c. 1416), or the Swiss Felix Faber (1483). In Faber's report, we read, almost as an aside, how easy it was to get together:

"And as we were staying in Venice, many pilgrims joined us, noblemen and commoners, from the whole German nation. And there were counts, and barons, knights and squires in Venice, and quite a few honest, decent, wealthy citizens. And with them came workmen, and many good, respectable priests with some prayerful, godfearing monks and brothers from monasteries, and several pious, demure, old and honourable women. And such pilgrims did not only come from Germany, they came from England, too, from Ireland, from Britain, from France and Spain, from Calabria, Arragon and Sicily, from Bohemia, Russia, and Prussia. Even from Hungary there were very respectable, learned men and priests."

Santiago de Compostela, west front of the Cathedral.

Some travellers have become famous for their accounts, the Italian Marco Polo (1272/1295) for example, the Englishwoman Mary

"The first landing of Columbus": Etching by Théodore de Bry (1528–1598).

That cue of monks and monasteries reminds us of the fact that this was the heyday of the great monastic orders which were active all over Europe and beyond and which were truly international and European in their composition – among them the Benedictines, the Augustinians, the Franciscans, the Dominicans, the Cistercians and the Carthusians. Many of them became involved when a new and different European era began: the epoch of colonization. Sensational discoveries and rediscoveries opened up new worlds – the West Indies, America, the sea routes around Africa and to India offered an increase in power and wealth, new markets, new produce, from gold to expensive herbs and spices. And the inhabitants of the newly discovered countries could become partners in trade, or, as slaves, they could become objects of trade themselves.

The Church felt the urge to take the Gospel to these people, and sooner or later, conflicts of interest would lead to lively discussions about the worth of the individual, and of human rights in general. Even today, five hundred years after the beginnings of colonial politics, those European nations which were actively involved are living with the consequences of the colonial era, for better or worse.

Learning from past errors may be one of the virtues of Europe. The heritage of the colonial era is no exception. And in fact, it was none other than Columbus, the Italian from Genoa in the retinue of King Ferdinand II and Queen Isabella I of Spain, who set an example of how to overcome all prejudice. He showed it in his attitude towards another people that had been treated as alien throughout most of Europe's history – the Jews.

Christopher Columbus (1451–1506), Seafarer and discoverer. Painting by Sebastiano del Piombo (1485–1547).

When the Jews were expelled from Spain in the very year of Columbus' voyage of discovery – an historical coincidence which led to many moving European commemorative events in the anniversary year 1992 –, the explorer decided to take a Jewish translator with him on his ship, and his own copy of the Old Testament book of Isaiah which can still be seen in the Biblioteca Colombina in Sevilla. Columbus, fully aware of the importance

Anti-Jewish progroms in Frankfurt am Main, 22 August 1614. Etching by Matthäus Merian (1593–1650).

of Judaism and the Jews for Europe, expected to meet descendants of one of the lost tribes of Israel on his journey. He did not find them, but he did travel in the right spirit of reconciliation and open-mindedness.

Another prime example of resistance and renewal at the beginning of the modern age was led by the same spirit of open-mindedness which prepared the ground for the European declaration of human rights. Charles V, the emperor who had heard the former Augustinian monk Martin Luther at the Diet of Worms in 1521, also listened to the Dominican monk Bartolomé de las Casas at his court in Valladolid. And Las Casas, who had witnessed the cruelties of the colonizers, defended the human rights of the Indios, and implored the emperor to treat them as equals under God. In 1542, Charles V issued the "New Laws" which prohibited slavery and enforced equal tax laws for Spaniards and Indios. Las Casas was appointed bishop of the Mexican province of Chiapas.

The character of Las Casas inspired several works of world literature, among them a novel by the German author Reinhold Schneider, "Las Casas before Charles V". Published in 1938, and known outside Germany under its English title "Imperial Mission", Schneider's novel was written in the light of the early stages of the persecution of the Jews by the Nazis. To Schneider, the Spanish monk and his emperor are examples of how to learn lessons from European history, to admit failure, sin, and crime, and to repent and change before it is too late. Where Las Casas had succeeded, Schneider's appeal failed. But even that novel about the courageous monk and his rueful king has remained an example of the European spirit of human rights and their defence in darkest times, and of their origins in an unadulterated Christian message.

Expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492: The 'Grand Inquisitor' Tomás de Torquemada enforces the act. Wood engraving after a painting by Michaly von Zichy (1827–1906).

Learning and teaching as European ideals: The first universities are founded with an eye to the neighbours. Students and teachers travel from country to country, old world-views and new research come together.

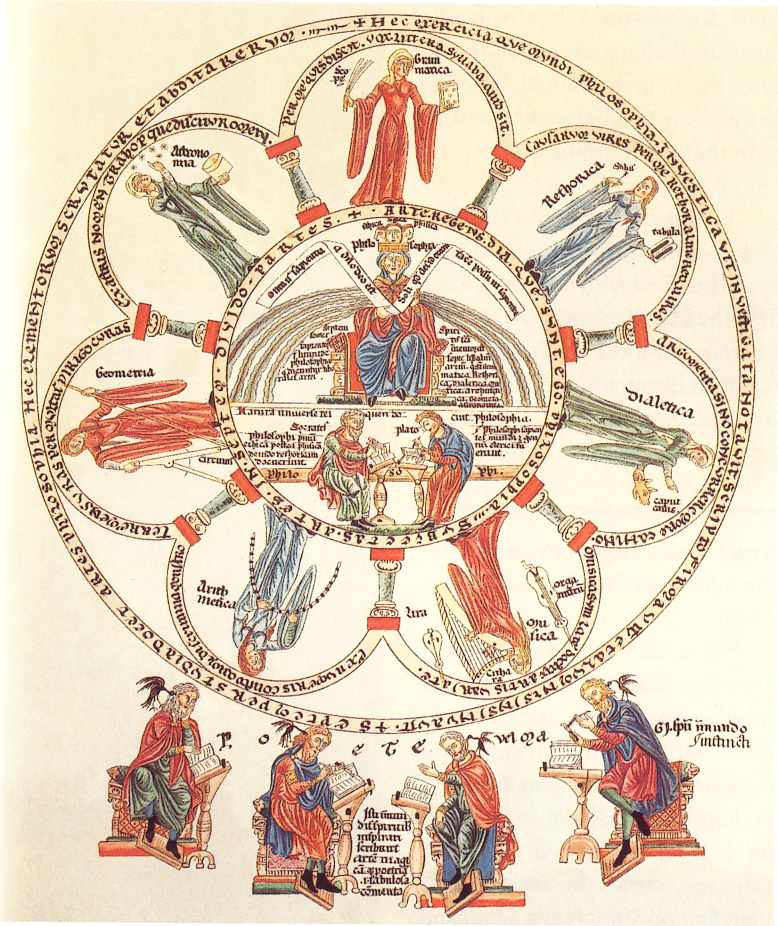
VI. The first Universities

In Sicily, you have the Syracusian and the Greek Library, and there also is Latin Philosophy ... Of course, you will find comparable libraries in England, too ... I shall supply you with as many provisions as I can to comfort you on your journey: Plato's 'Phaidon' on the immortality of the soul, translated from Greek into Latin. I have begun this translation in encampment, when the King besieged the Samnite city of Benevent, and I finished it in Palermo.

HENRICUS ARISTIPPUS,
LETTER TO HIS COLLEAGUE HASKINS ON HIS RETURN TO ENGLAND, C. 1157

At a very early age he was sent to the Abbey of Monte Cassino for elementary schooling, and in about 1239 he went as a student to the university of Naples, which had been founded by Emperor Frederick II in 1224. While at Naples he entered the Dominican Order, and this action aroused opposition on the part of his family, who shut him up for a time under guard. On regaining his freedom, he went north to pursue his studies under Albert the Great, also a Dominican, at Paris and Cologne.

F.C. COPLESTON,
AQUINAS, 1955 (ON THE EUROPEAN EDUCATION OF THOMAS AQUINAS)



Philosophy and the 'Seven Liberal Arts'. Miniature from the 'Garden of Paradise' of the Alsatian abbess and poet Herrad von Landsberg (c. 1126–1195).

The Renaissance of the Educational System, or Elites without Elitism

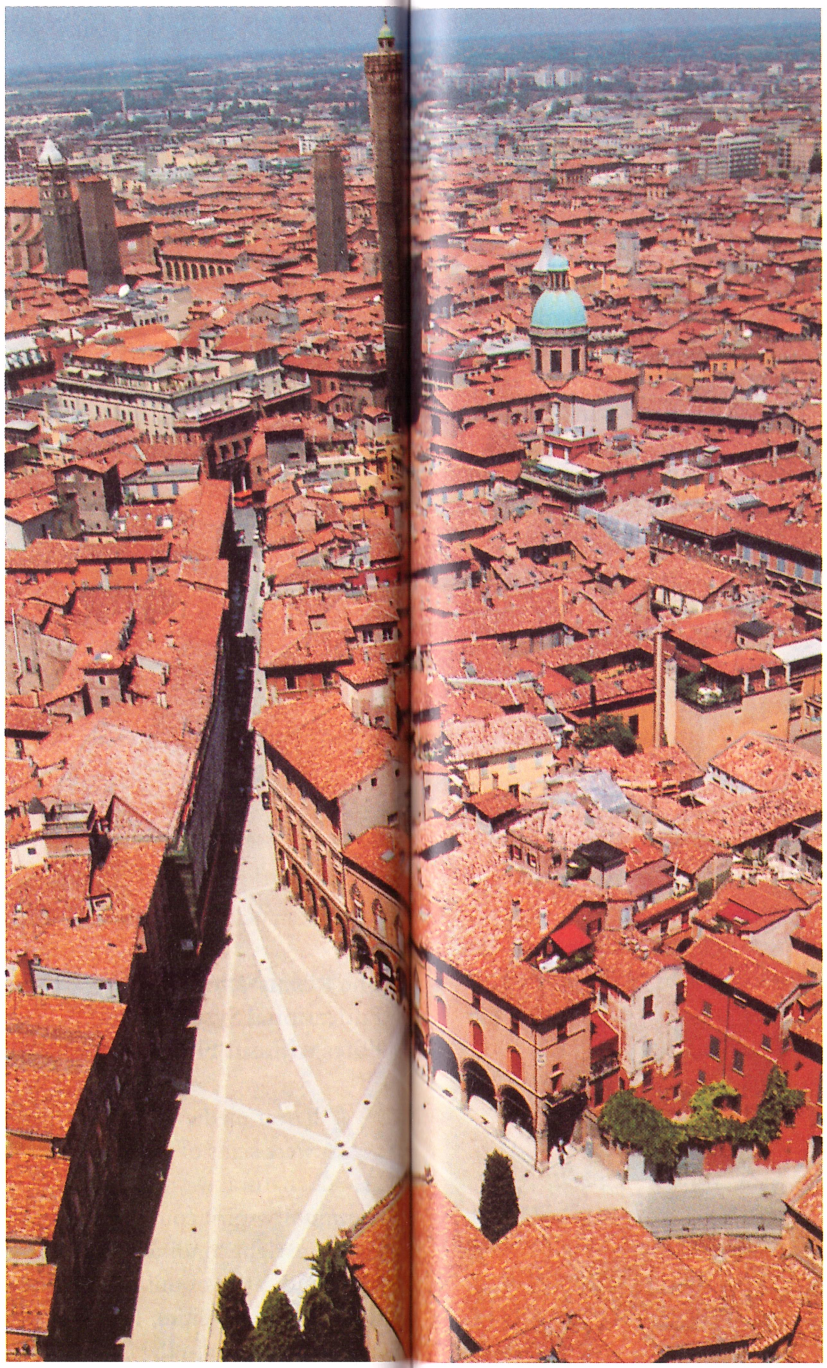
All over medieval Europe, there were signs of a perfectly natural way in which a community spirit could develop, given the right conditions. One sector indicative of this was, and still is, the universities. The very name, derived from the Latin "universitas", means no less than "the whole", "the entirety". Was this entirety limited to knowledge, or did it include entirety of cooperation against the background of common roots? Both aspects came together, when the first university was established in Bologna, in 1119. In fact, there were two universities: one for students from north of the Alps, another for those from the south. However, it is not this division

which is noteworthy, but the fact that this double university was based on an international, European concept, in both parts, and from the very beginning.

"University", quite like "Europe" itself, is an empty shell, a term that has to be filled with meaning. At first, the University of Bologna was far from our modern idea of a university. It began life as a school for law students; the arts and medicine were only added after 1280. And it

Jean Gerson, Expert Report on the Reform of Theological Studies, 1400

"First: There should not be such generally useless, fruitless and unsubstantiated teachings, for because of them, teachings which are useful and necessary for salvation are being neglected. 'They do not know the things which are necessary, because they have learned those which are superfluous,' Seneca says. Second, all those who do not study are being led astray by them, because they must believe that theologians are above all those who apply themselves to such teachings in contempt of the Bible and of other teachers. Third, through them the technical terms used by the holy teachers are being changed, against the principle of St Augustine: 'We have to speak according to a certain rule', etc. And nothing else causes the decay of a science faster than this."



The old town of Bologna, Italy, where Europe's first University was established.

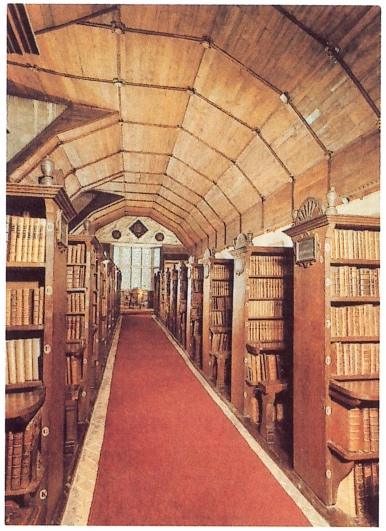
took another eighty years before theology could be studied at Bologna. This Italian city had lead the field, but others soon took over and increased the speed. Paris, for example, and Oxford soon had more faculties than Bologna, and a broader spectrum of study possibilities. By the mid-thirteenth century, other universities had been set up almost everywhere in Europe: Modena, Naples, Padua, Parma, Perugia and Siena in Italy, Salamanca in Spain, Lisbon in Portugal, Cambridge in England. The trend continued in the 14th century with several universities in German-speaking Europe, Prague (1348), Vienna (1365), Heidelberg (1386), and Cologne (1388), and up to the Reformation, Europe had a closely knit network of universities which all embodied the classical heritage of Greek and Latin academies – one of the pillars of intellectual Europe.

That tradition is once again evident in the terminology: this time in the word "academy" and its derivations. Every institution which uses the word "Academy" to describe its status and reason of being, all academics with their academic degrees, the academic year and many other things besides, owe their use of such words to Plato and his Academy which he established in Athens, c. 385 BC, as a school of philosophy named after the nearby shrine of the ancient hero Akademos. An "accidental" name at the start of Euro-

pean educational systems – just as Europe itself owes its own name to a young girl playing on a Lebanese beach.

And playing was indeed an integral part of academic beginnings, when the pupils and friends of Plato met in Athens to discuss the importance of knowledge. The characteristic form of dialogue which Plato owed to his teacher Socrates and developed further to a literary art form, includes playful elements. So much so that the Dutch historian Johan Huizinga called the Platonic Dialogue a light and playful form of art. For Plato, Huizinga said, philosophy, with all its profundity, "remained a noble game".

Hardly anything remains of this idea of a noble game in the everyday reality of modern academies and universities. Rivalry, career-mindedness, competition for sponsorship leave no room for playful composure. And perhaps it is this contrast between classical practise and contemporary realities which has contributed to the Europe-wide popularity of an annual academic game played by two of Europe's oldest universities: the boat race between Oxford and Cambridge on the Thames. An entertaining media event these days, but behind it there are two old traditions: the idea of "a healthy mind in a healthy body" (or, in Latin, "mens sana in corpore sano"), and the Platonic ideal of the



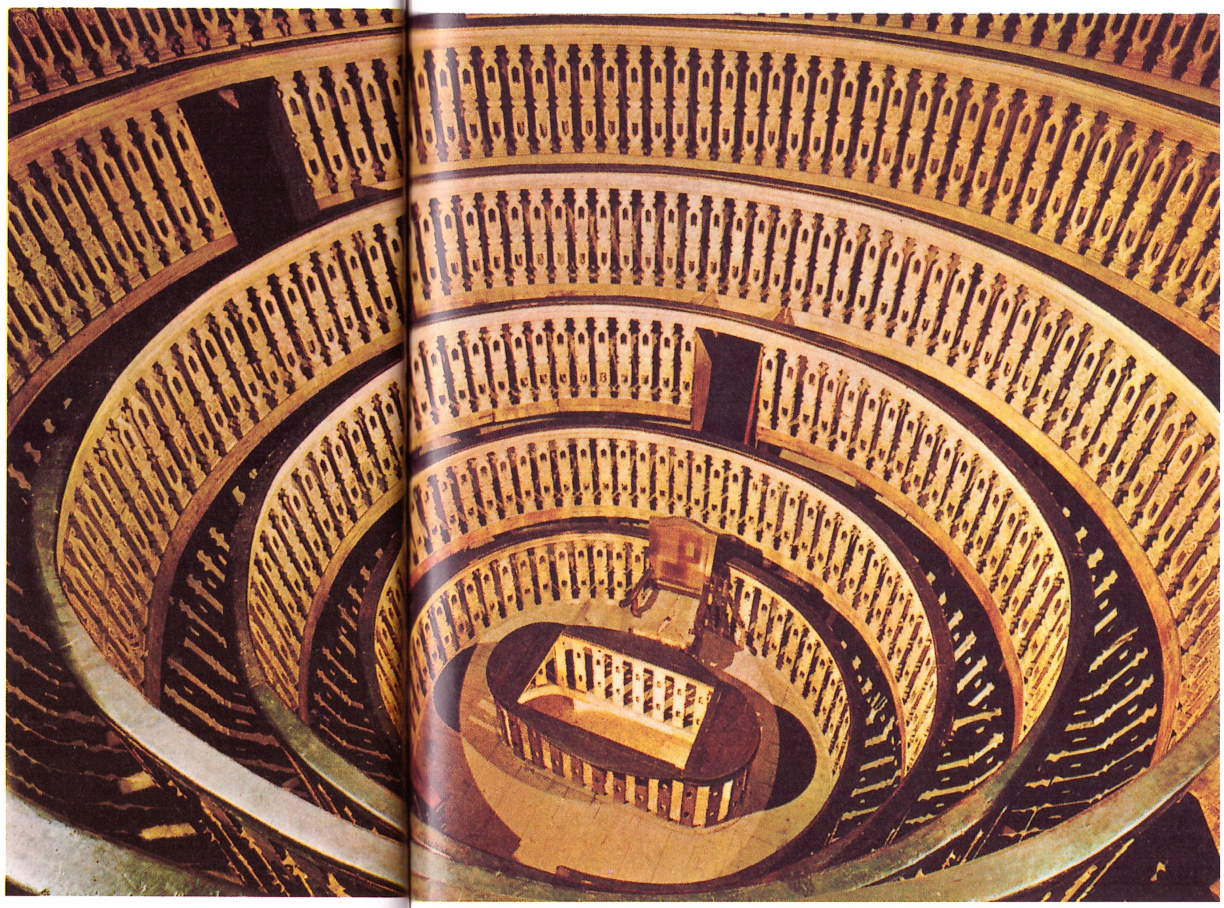
Left page: Plato and Socrates. Illuminated manuscript from St Albans, England, c. 1250.

Left: The Old Library of Merton College, Oxford, founded in 1264.

stimulating battle of wits, between the students and their teachers,in their weekly "tutorials". They even have a Club, and only those can be proposed for membership at "Vincent's" in Oxford who can prove both academic excellence and a place in a team which competed against Cambridge. Rituals which some observers may find a trifle amusing – but this only proves the point: it is a vital part of the universality of learning, researching and teaching to be able to take oneself less seriously from time to time. This, in any case, is how European academic studies once began. And perhaps the Swedish Academy of Science knew what it was doing in 1995, when it awarded a Nobel Prize to the inventor of a theory of playing.

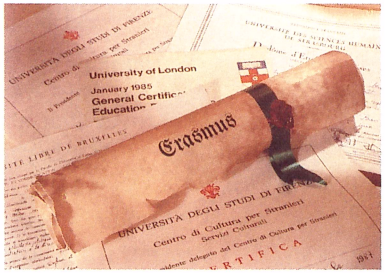
Plato's Academy, the precursor of universities, continued to exist for

almost 1000 years, until it was closed down by Emperor Justinian in AD 529. The name and the spirit survived; and the cooperation of like-minded scholars at centres of learning and research became a decisive element of Charlemagne's "Carolingian Renaissance". Alcuin's academy of scholars would have been unthinkable without Plato's example. Later, when universities were fully operative, academies ran parallel to them and focusssed on a concentrated exchange of opinion and research among leading scholars. Some of them were consciously national, like the "Académie française" in Paris, founded in 1635; others, like the "Prussian Academy of Sciences" established by King Frederick the Great in Berlin, attached great importance to the participation of members from other countries. Today, there are academies galore, academies of art, of theology, of mining, of language, there are military, papal and royal academies, and many more. And in Switzerland people are proud of the fact that the two great old universities in the French-speaking part of the country once began life as modest Academies: Lausanne (1537) and Geneva (1559) – an example followed by Berne and Neuchâtel. Such a traditional development implies a degree of commitment and obligation even today. And this includes the education of a European elite and its systematic cultivation, as a necessary service to the whole of society, without any form of elitist snobbery.



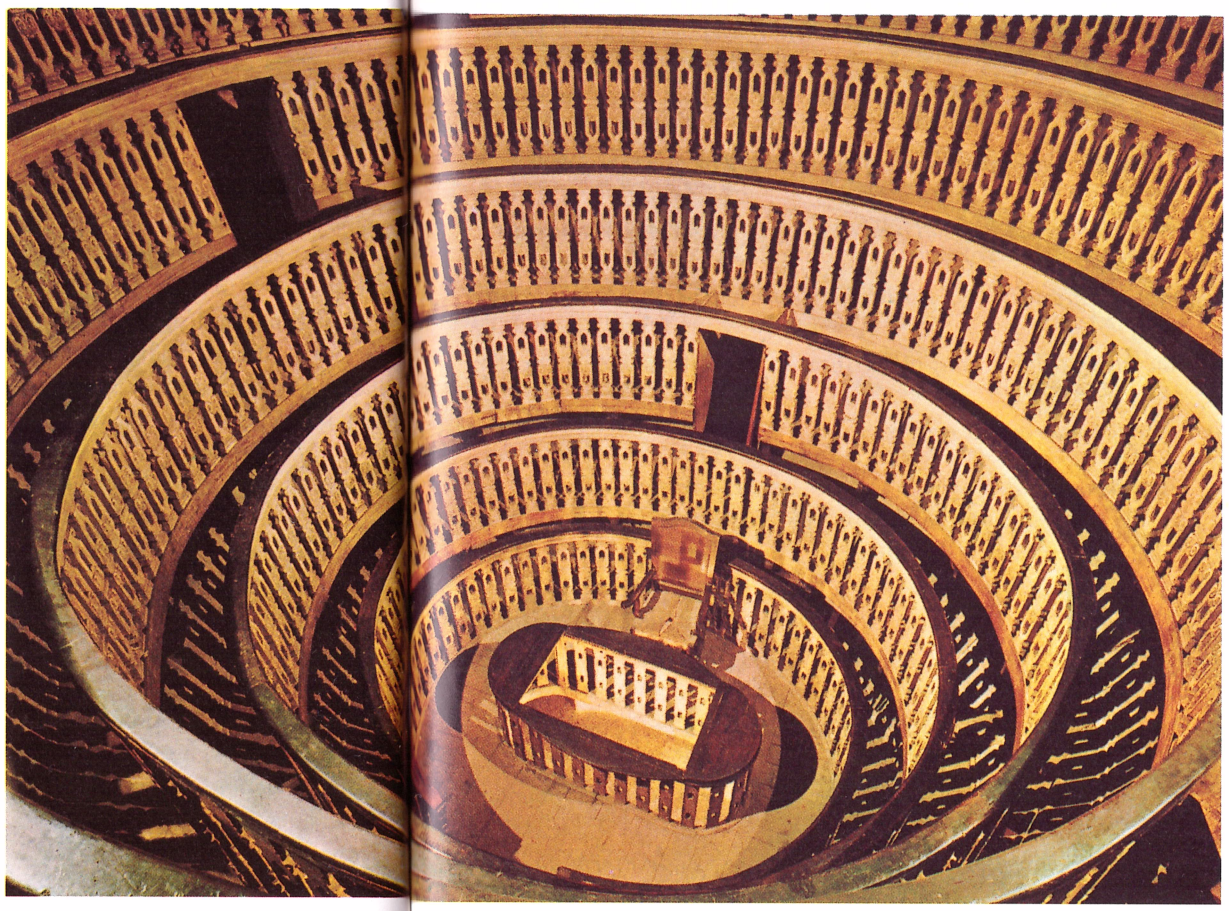
The Anatomy Lecture Hall at the University of Padua, Italy, founded in 1222.

The net of universities which soon spread across Europe led to a more lively exchange of students and of teachers in all directions than anything happening today. The European Union has understood the need to emulate the well-tried ways of the past. The number of students who spend at least one year at a university abroad is increasing steadily; in 1995, it was six per cent of all European students. And the EU has initiated an exchange programme named after one of the great European thinkers, Erasmus. It provides scholarships in increasing numbers: no fewer than 150,000 in 1996.



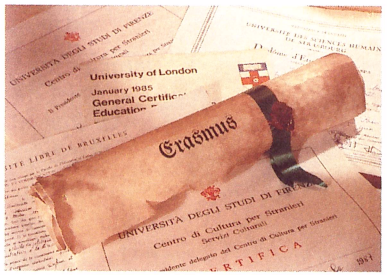
The 'Erasmus Programme' of the European Union sponsors the Europe-wide exchange of students.

almost 1000 years, until it was closed down by Emperor Justinian in AD 529. The name and the spirit survived; and the cooperation of like-minded scholars at centres of learning and research became a decisive element of Charlemagne's "Carolingian Renaissance". Alcuin's academy of scholars would have been unthinkable without Plato's example. Later, when universities were fully operative, academies ran parallel to them and focusssed on a concentrated exchange of opinion and research among leading scholars. Some of them were consciously national, like the "Académie française" in Paris, founded in 1635; others, like the "Prussian Academy of Sciences" established by King Frederick the Great in Berlin, attached great importance to the participation of members from other countries. Today, there are academies galore, academies of art, of theology, of mining, of language, there are military, papal and royal academies, and many more. And in Switzerland people are proud of the fact that the two great old universities in the French-speaking part of the country once began life as modest Academies: Lausanne (1537) and Geneva (1559) – an example followed by Berne and Neuchâtel. Such a traditional development implies a degree of commitment and obligation even today. And this includes the education of a European elite and its systematic cultivation, as a necessary service to the whole of society, without any form of elitist snobbery.



The Anatomy Lecture Hall at the University of Padua, Italy, founded in 1222.

The net of universities which soon spread across Europe led to a more lively exchange of students and of teachers in all directions than anything happening today. The European Union has understood the need to emulate the well-tried ways of the past. The number of students who spend at least one year at a university abroad is increasing steadily; in 1995, it was six per cent of all European students. And the EU has initiated an exchange programme named after one of the great European thinkers, Erasmus. It provides scholarships in increasing numbers: no fewer than 150,000 in 1996.



The 'Erasmus Programme' of the European Union sponsors the Europe-wide exchange of students.

I wish I could witness in our century, which promises to be a golden century if ever there was a golden one, how under your felicitous provision those three most noble possessions of mankind will be reestablished: true Christian piousness, which has been decaying in manifold ways, the most advanced science, which has partly deteriorated and partly been corrupted, and the lasting political unity of the Christian world which is the source for both: for piousness and knowledge.

ERASMUS,
LETTER TO POPE LEO X, 1514

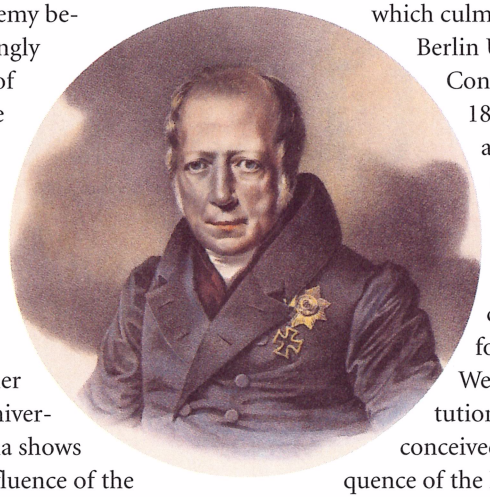
Not only the children of the rich and powerful, but both boys and girls, rich and poor, in the cities and in the villages, should be sent to school. ... If anyone should ask, 'What will be the result if artisans, people from the country, porters, or even women become literate ?', I answer them: None of them will lack the material for thinking, choosing, following and doing good things. ... The slower and weaker the disposition of any person, the more they need assistance.

JAN AMOS KOMENSKY (COMENIUS),
THE GREAT DIDACTIC, 1532

Science and Faith – an old Theme is Europeanized

The modern age has seen many a protracted controversy about this notion – the freedom of academic teaching and research. The privilege to decide on one's methods of procedure and one's subjects of study without the influence of State or Church has never been undisputed: Critical observers have seen the danger of arbitrariness and subjective exclusivenesss. Can or even must the body politic tolerate a teaching which, for example, attacks the state to which the teacher has sworn an oath? Can a Catholic or Protestant university grant the freedom to undermine the very foundations of Christianity and the Christian faith? A look at Plato's Academy can shed some light on this: the Academy became increasingly independent of Athenian state politics and influence precisely as a reaction to the judicial murder of Socrates; equally, another look at the University of Bologna shows us that the influence of the Church was non-existent until a small and modest theological faculty was admitted one and a half centuries after the university had been established. The ideal of academic liberties was workable, and hence worth fighting for. And obviously, the more State or Church tried to exert a lasting influence, and the more individual students and staff were ready to suffer hardships for their insistence on these liberties, the more it became a question of principle and of the whole structure of academic education.

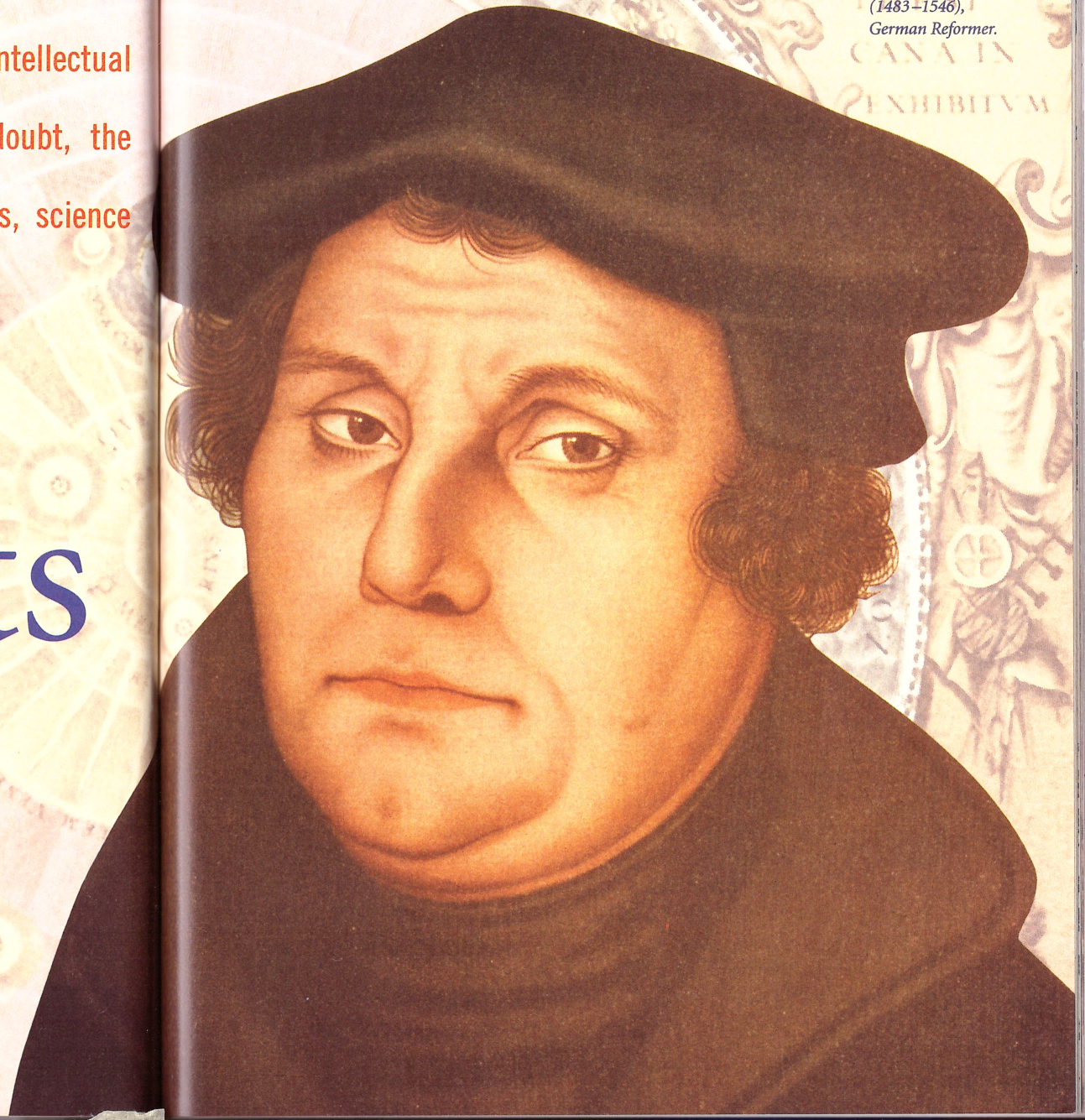
While several European countries were going in the same direction, the first university which was granted the freedom of academic teaching and research in its founding charter was Göttingen in 1734. One of the great European minds of the 19th century, Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835), initiated an educational reform in Prussia which culminated in the Berlin University Constitution of 1816, serving as a welcome example for other German and European countries to follow. The Weimar Constitution of 1919, conceived as a consequence of the First World War, and looking back at earlier educational achievements, embodied this right in article 142.



Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835), Prussian diplomat and educationalist; founder of the University of Berlin in 1809.

The Reformation divides Europe, bridge-builders create perspectives for the future, intellectual roots establish connections. Out of doubt, the strengths of common values in politics, science and faith are shaped.

VII. Thoughts are free



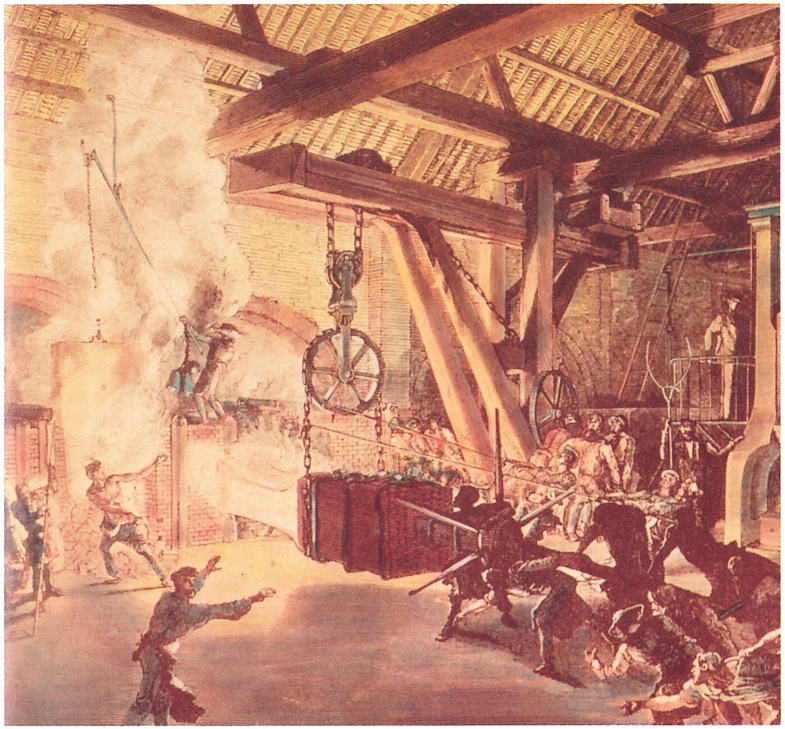
Martin Luther (1483–1546), German Reformer.

And so in London I abode almost a year, and marked the course of the world, and heard our praters, I would say our preachers, how they boasted themselves and their high authority, and beheld the pomp of our prelates, and how busied they were as they yet are, to set peace and unity in the world ... and saw things whereof I defer to speak at this time and understood at the last not only that there was no room in my lord of London's palace to translate the New Testament, but also that there was no place to do it in all England, as experience doth now openly declare.

WILLIAM TYNDALE,
PREFACE TO HIS TRANSLATION OF THE PENTATEUCH, 1530

A Christian is bound by twofold obedience: to God and to his prince. And this twofold obedience is only dissolved when the prince gives an order which is against God. For then, one has to obey God more than man.

MARTIN LUTHER,
TABLE TALKS, C. 1531



Production in the iron foundry of Le Creusat, France. Wood engraving, 1861.

Europe between Power and Faith

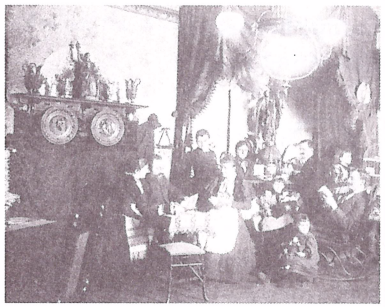
„Of course there is a common historical and cultural experience in Europe," the German newspaper 'Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung' wrote on the 28th September 1994. "Part of this experience is the adoption of antiquity, Christianity, the experience of the wars of religion, and industrialization, to name but a few." Michael Jeismann, the author of that article, adds: "It is true that all of this is more than mere collective memory, but it is not enough to define our role in the present age. European unity will not be able to exist as a mere community of joint heirs. Thus, the question to be addressed is what the linking and the separating elements of the societies to be united in this union really are." These reflections were inspired by an opinion poll on values, carried out by the renowned German Allensbach Institute. The institute had confined itself to France and Germany which were seen as the two central pillars of the European process of unification. Obviously, the other countries of the European Union must eventually be included in such a poll if it is to inform and guide decision-makers – not least

Top: Distinguished visitors in a farmhouse parlour. Painting by Jan Brueghel, c. 1600.

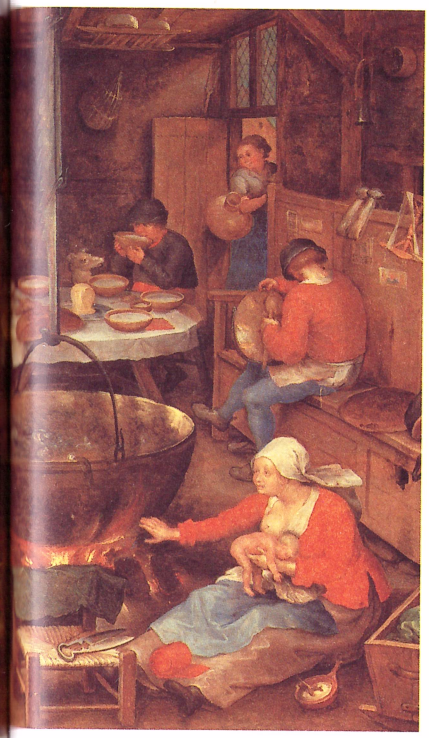
Bottom: Lower middle class family with relatives, photograph, Germany, c. 1895.

the relatively new members, regardless of size and population figures. And European values must also be judged within those countries who are not yet members of the Union, by countries waiting in the wings, especially those from Central and Eastern Europe. But in the meantime, such a poll which evaluates French and German public opinion is at least a useful starting point. And indeed, the results are instructive:

There is a considerable consensus in both countries on the value of the family and of religion. The analyst describes the surprisingly great importance attached to these two pillars of society and social coexistence, as "emotional". Marriage, he thinks, is not really valued as an institution, but for its "emotional quality". And the deep respect for religion is interpreted as the consequence of a "comparatively distinct and pronounced religious feeling and need in both countries", which is "not orientated so much towards the official Churches", but is seen as "individually perceived". Europe as an emotional entity, at home in small units, and as faraway as possible from institutions and all they have to offer – this smacks of a return to original ways and values. But do "feeling" and "need" truly provide reliable yardsticks in ethical, religious and social matters? Such questions are not new. They came up in the course of the most

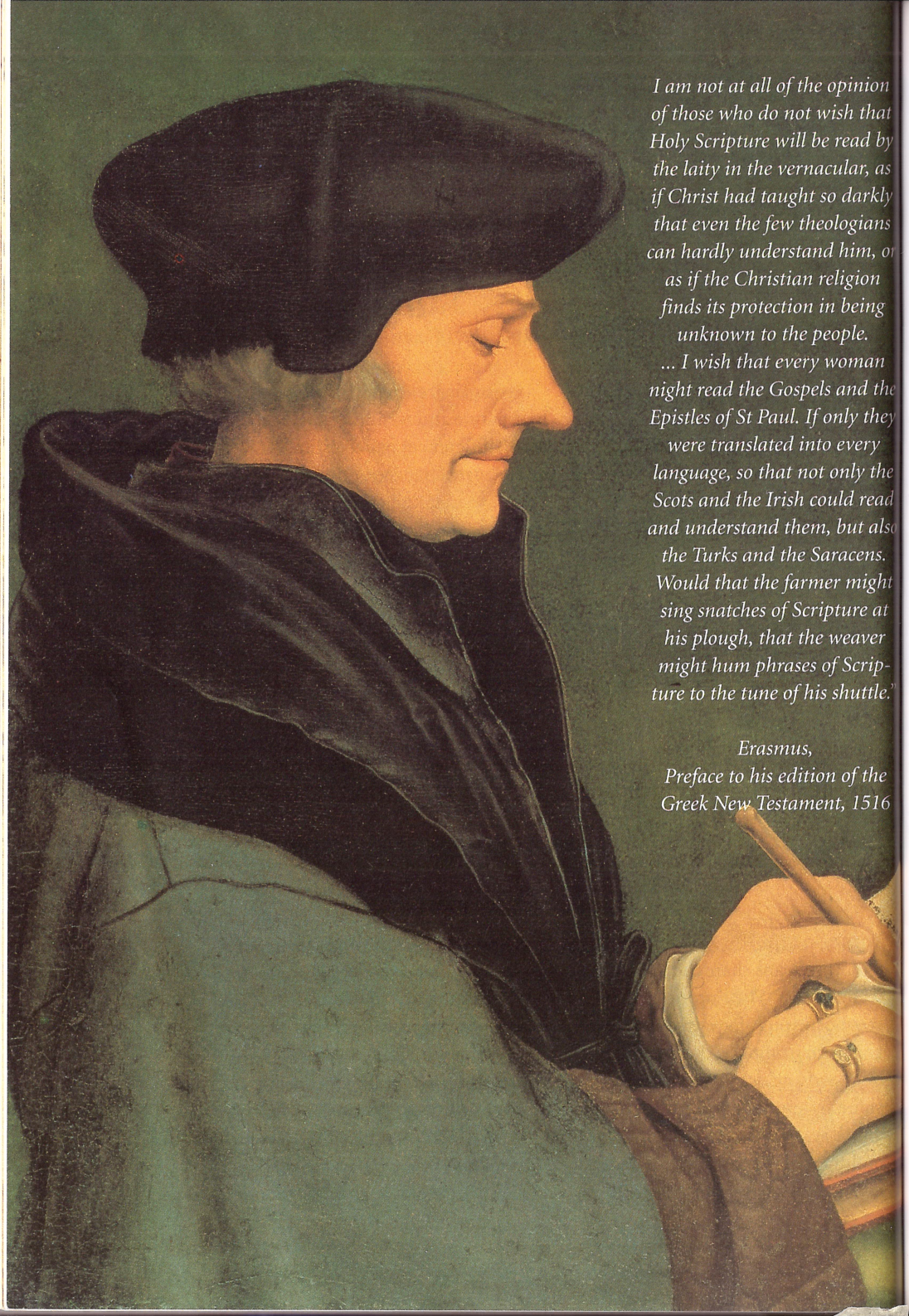


radical change prior to the wars and their consequences in the 20th century: the Reformation and its corollaries, four and a half centuries ago. We are still being affected by the far-reaching changes which were initiated by the Reformation, Counter-Reformation, Thirty Years War



and Enlightenment. And only very slowly are we beginning to see the divisive aspects of this heritage decreasing in importance. One of those who have expressed this clearly is the German Chancellor Helmut Kohl. Only a few weeks before the Wall between East and West fell in Berlin, in October 1989, he said: "All Europeans share the same intellectual roots. The European idea was borne out of awareness of these common origins. It cannot be understood and realized without the value system which is ours and which was shaped by Christianity and the Enlightenment. It is based on the uniqueness of man, on respect for life , respect for human rights and individual civil liberties. The unifying power of this cultural heritage must not fade. Therefore, we must sharpen consciousness of the cultural dimension which is Europe." And: "The European Community, as we understand it, is not least and above all a community of values and of culture."

Historical events which served to separate and terminate relationships, differences between State and Church, between princes and popes, secular and religious power, struggles and divisions even within Christendom – all of these were common before the Reformation. There was the break between Eastern and Western churches, between "Byzantium" and "Rome", officially declared after extended conflicts, in 1054. There was the feud between Emperor and Pope, which ended in Henry IV's penitential pilgrimage to Canossa. There was the "Babylonian Exile" of the popes in Avignon which lasted from 1309 to 1377 and was followed by a split between popes and anti-popes in Rome and Avignon until 1417. And at the same time, there were the wars between nations and religions being fought with their unforgotten victims, among them men whose names still ring a bell: Jan Hus, for example, who was executed at the Council of Constance in 1415 and whose death precipitated the Hussite Wars in Moravia and Bohemia;



I am not at all of the opinion of those who do not wish that Holy Scripture will be read by the laity in the vernacular, as if Christ had taught so darkly that even the few theologians can hardly understand him, or as if the Christian religion finds its protection in being unknown to the people.
... I wish that every woman night read the Gospels and the Epistles of St Paul. If only they were translated into every language, so that not only the Scots and the Irish could read and understand them, but also the Turks and the Saracens. Would that the farmer might sing snatches of Scripture at his plough, that the weaver might hum phrases of Scripture to the tune of his shuttle."

Erasmus,
Preface to his edition of the Greek New Testament, 1516

or Joan of Arc, burnt at the stake in 1431, whose death marked a turning point in the Hundred Years War between England and France and who was canonized soon afterwards. And so the list of names and events goes on. The period before Luther's famous 95 Theses in 1517, which is seen as the starting point of the Reformation, was in fact anything but a community of values and culture in those parts of Europe where power politics were on the agenda.

Looking at the early 16th century in such a context, Luther's 95 Theses were originally no more than an invitation to a discussion arising out of a mood that had been sensed for some time, in other countries and by other theologians: mystics like Johannes Eckhart (called 'Meister Eckhart') at the end of the 13th century come to mind, as do the Franciscan Minorites throughout western Europe, around 1323, or John Wycliffe in England, about 1383, and, again, Jan Hus in Bohemia. There was the increasingly belligerent dispute between the followers of St Thomas Aquinas and those of William of Ockham and his "Modern way" ('via moderna') which led the latter into exile at the court of Emperor Louis IV in Munich. And between them, there was Geert Geerts, the Dutchman better known as Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466–1536), travelling between his native country, Basle in Switzerland and the University of Cambridge, teaching and writing and attempting to build bridges between the humanists and the Christian tradition. All of them and many others belonged to a period of change and of the quest for new structures everywhere in Europe.

From among such turmoil and efforts at conciliation, Martin Luther's challenge emerged as the most concrete, aiming as it did at the definition of faith and doctrine, of authority and individual responsibilities. Both the Emperor and the Pope understood this, and in other European countries it was soon taken up: by the Swiss Zwingli in Zurich, by the Frenchman Calvin in Geneva, by the Englishman Tyndale in Cologne, Worms, and Antwerp. Political support was quick to come, from the Saxon Elector Frederick at the outset, and from Henry VIII

Luther nails his 95 theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, 31 October 1517. Painting by Hugo Vogel.

Left: Erasmus (1466–1536), Dutch humanist. Painting by Hans Holbein the Younger (1497–1543).

Joan of Arc (Jeanne d'Arc, c. 1410–1431), painting by Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres, 1854.

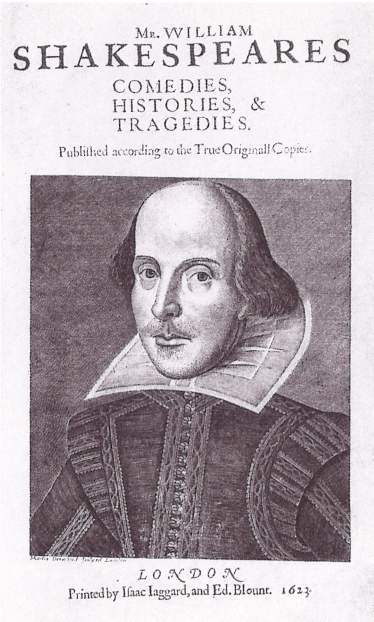
Philipp Melanchthon (1497–1560), German reformer and philologist. Painting by Lucas Cranach the Elder, 1532.

in England as the initiator of the Anglican Church of England, among others. Leaving aside the differing motives of these protagonists, the speed with which the simmering internal and external unrest found its outlet in the European Reformation remains remarkable.

In such an environment, the use of violence still appeared to be unavoidable: there were not just those stakes in Geneva, Oxford, Vilvoorde and elsewhere, there were the Peasants' Wars and the persecution of the Huguenots, the restoration of the Inquisition by Pope Paul III (1542), the French Massacre of St Bartholomew, in 1572, the bloody wars between the Spanish, the Dutch and the British over supremacy in western Europe, or the conversions of ruling houses or some of their members, in both directions and often accompanied by assassinations. Despite all this, there was somehow sufficient calm to uphold common European values: In Wittenberg for example, the university appointed one of the most emininent philologists of his time, the young Philip Melanchthon. This was in 1518, and with him and his colleagues, experts in the ancient languages of the Bible and of the Graeco-Roman classics, a centre for the study and analysis of Biblical literature came into being.

The Massacre of St Bartholomew: the killing of the Huguenots in Paris, which lasted from the night of 23/24 August to 30 August 1572. Painting by François Dubois (1790–1871).

They established the foundations for modern translations into the vernacular. Luther profited from their work, as did William Tyndale, the English theologian and translator who became the first to translate the New Testament from the original Greek into contemporary English and had begun the translation of the the Hebrew Old Testament, which was cut short by his execution as a "heretic" in 1536. What Luther did for the German language and literature, Tyndale achieved for the whole English-speaking world – he created a common literary language; and he had acquired the tools of his trade, the



William Shakespeare (1564–1616), English poet and dramatist.

knowledge of Greek and Hebrew, at three of Europe's leading universities: Oxford, Cambridge, and Wittenberg. It was the period of Lukas Cranach and Hans Holbein, of Albrecht Dürer and Benvenuto Cellini, of Michelangelo and Titian, of Paracelsus and Copernicus, of El Greco and Cervantes, of Christopher Marlowe and Thomas Tallis. And at the end of the century, there was William Shakespeare with his first plays. They and so many others in all the European countries personify the greatness of European art, literature, music, and the sciences in that age.

And it was equally characteristic of the European spirit of the epoch that leading minds everywhere protested against the execution of Thomas Morus by King Henry VIII in 1535, regardless of national and religious boundaries. They were aware of one another, and continued to exchange opinions and theories in spite of controversies and public polemics. And everyone profited from one of the great beneficial revolutions of modern times: the invention of printing with movable type by Gutenberg in Mainz, in 1445. The new technique spread across Europe at lightning speed, and helped to change the landscape of communications. Among the advantages it brought were the general accessibility of the results of research, of the endeavours of poetry and literature, and the source of Judaeo-Christian culture – the Bible. There was no irony intended when Ulrich von Hutten (d. 1523) coined a popular saying: "O century, o science, it is a joy to live !"

Johannes Gutenberg (1400–1465), German printer and inventor of printing by movable type.

Right Page: Gutenberg's Bible, in Latin, printed in Mainz, 1455. Prologue to the Old Testament book of Proverbs.

Is it true that our soul protests against the materialization and mechanization of our life, that it protests against the progress we have made in the fight against the untold suffering through hunger and pestilence which characterized the Middle Ages ? Is it true that the mind suffered when it had to serve humanity as a technician, and was it happier to serve as a serf or a slave?

KARL POPPER,
THE OPEN SOCIETY AND ITS ENEMIES, 1966

I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only a boy playing on the sea-shore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.

ISAAC NEWTON,
C. 1727, IN BREWSTER'S MEMOIRS OF NEWTON

The capture of Constantinople by the Turks under Sultan Mohammed II Fatih, 29 May 1453. Lithograph by R. Weibezahl, 1832.

Unity in Diversity? The Period of Bridge-Builders

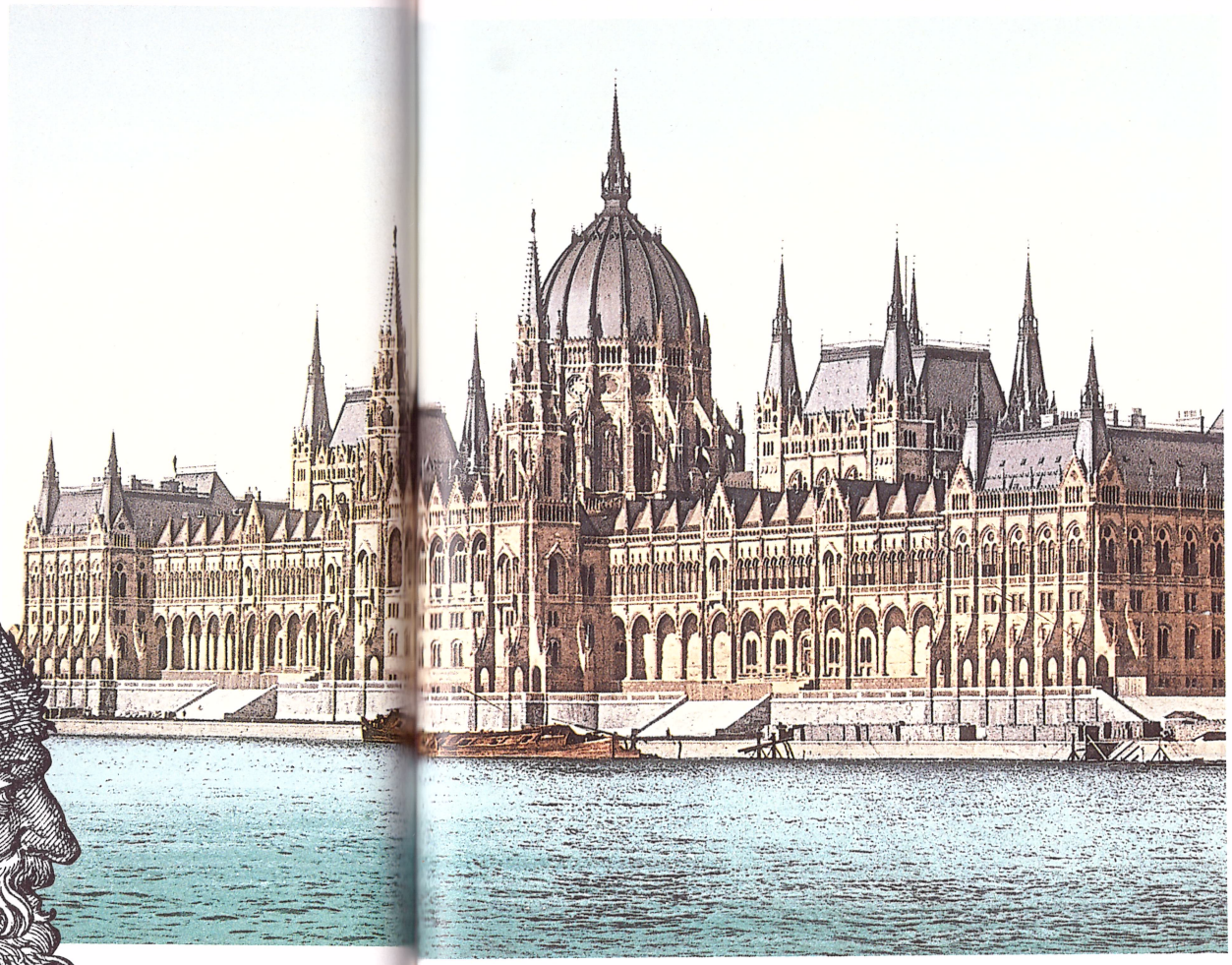
There was a sense of optimism, a confidence which persevered despite the cruelties of the age. The achievements of the Renaissance, the conscious, systematic reclaiming of classical culture, the sciences, philosophy, a Europe-wide architectural programme with master builders and engineers constructing not just cathedrals and palaces, but also the symbols of municipal and civic pride in the towns and cities – all of this flourished in spite of and perhaps even because of the radical changes in ecclesiastical and secular power structures.

These struggles were a part of the scene in Europe for the next few centuries, and in some cases even until today. Certainly, the loss of Constantinople, after the Islamic conquest in

The Imperial Double Eagle, the coat of arms of the Tzars.

1453, the ensuing advance of Turkish troops which reached Belgrade, and decades later, in 1529, Vienna – these were events which not only questioned the territorial concept of Europe. The divisions within Christendom had become, long before the Reformation, almost a threat to survival. Thus, the Orthodox commander of the defending forces in the Byzantine capital Constantinople declared, when he saw the Turkish fleet approaching, that he would rather live under the Turkish turban than see the Latin (i.e., Roman-Catholic) mitre rule over his city. And while these unedifying controversies continued, a "third" Rome established itself in the north-east: Constantinople had hardly ceased to exist as a centre of orthodox Christianity, when the Russians declared themselves the true successors. In 1472, Ivan III stayed in Rome and married the niece of the last Byzantine emperor. With his choice of wedding place and wife, he symbolically underlined his political claims. Italian builders went to Moscow and embellished the Kremlin according to Renaissance models. The Byzantine double eagle was integrated into the Imperial crest (where it remains today), and the Russian idea of imperialism acquired a religious framework: Ivan was declared "the only Tzar over Christendom", the "leader of the apostolic Church". And, even more unmistakably: "All Christian empires have disappeared, in their place, and according to the prophetical scriptures, only Russia remains." The first and second Rome have fallen, but the third Rome endures, and there will not be a fourth.

Iwan III. (1440–1505), Tzar of Russia.



The Hungarian House of Parliament in Budapest, c. 1900.

The Thirty Years War (1618–1648) brought suffering on an unprecedented scale to the population of central Europe. Wood engraving after an etching by Hans Ulrich Frank.

On 23 May 1618, a delegation of Czech nobles threw the Habsburg governors out of a window of the Hradčany Castle into a dungheap, protesting against the attacks on Protestant churches. This „Defenestration of Prague" started the Thirty Years War.

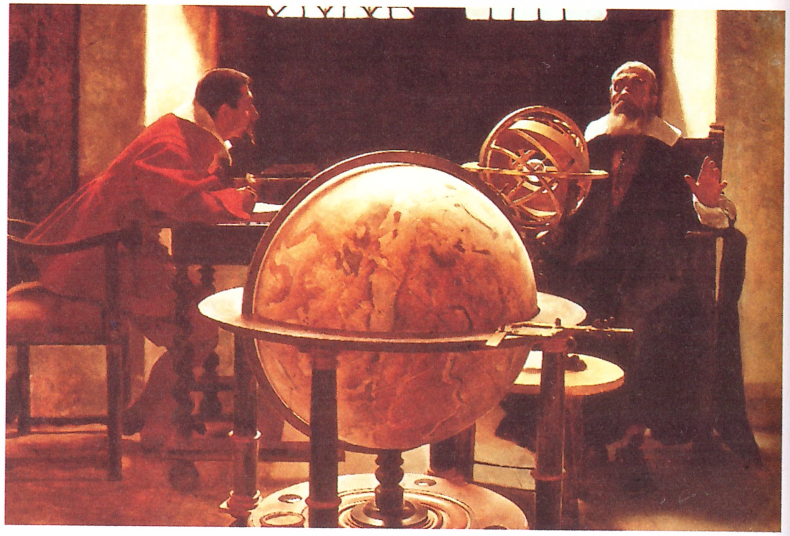
Below: The capture of Protestant Magdeburg by Catholic troups on 20 May 1631. 25,000 inhabitants died, the city was almost completely destroyed by fire.

It was, to say the least, hardly a step towards a reunification of the Churches and their different traditions. In mainly Roman-Catholic Poland, for example, when the country had gained independence after the First World War, the Russian-Orthodox cathedral in Warsaw's main square was pulled down. The integration of Central and Eastern Europe looked increasingly unattainable – but again, as we have seen when we were looking west, towards the Iberian Peninsula, and south, towards Venice and further, even to Greek master builders in central Germany, a communal spirit, the sense of a common bond, had not been imposed by decisions from above. It may indeed have happened in a religious context, as on pilgrimages crossing the whole continent. And it may have been fostered by regional rulers, by the Europe-wide exchange and employment of artists and architects. But the will and the creative spirit had to come from the people. Innovative ideas contributed to progress, sometimes against the grain of the times, sometimes as the spearhead of improvement.

One of the decisive ingredients of this development was, strange as this may seem at first glance, the introduction of the vernacular as an acceptable form of academic, theological and general communication. When, to begin with, the Bible was translated into practically every European language soon after the Reformation – including the (as it seemed) minority languages of the European north, Danish, for example, as early as 1524, or Icelandic in 1540, an irrevocable breakthrough had been achieved. One of the first scientists to profit from this access to a wider, international public, was the Italian Galileo Galilei (1564–1642), the inventor of the term "natural laws", and of modern, experimental sciences. Explaining, as a follower of Copernicus, that the sun was the centre of the universe, and not the earth, he went on to insist that this did not cause a conflict between Science and the Bible (which does not address this question), and that faith and knowledge remain reconcilable. His position became widely popular not least because he no longer published his results in Latin, the commonly accepted language of academic discourse, but in the vernacular which everyone who could read was able to understand. They were soon translated into English and other European languages, reached northern and eastern Europe and stimulated a lasting debate which later influenced the Age of Enlighten-

Galileo Galilei (1564–1642), Italian mathematician and philosopher.

Sir Isaac Newton (1643–1727), English physicist and mathematician. He discovered the law of gravity, created calculus and developed the three standard laws of motion.



Right: „Milton visits Galilei". Painting by Tito Lessi (1858–1927).

ment. It was, in short, a bridge to the modern age of Europe. For the first time, a general public had access to first-hand information and realized that lasting values could not be established by insisting on ossified doctrines, and that the Biblical truths and the historicity of the Christian faith with its Jewish foundations did not conflict with the advance of the sciences, nor with the use of one's own mind. This was progress indeed, not least – as it turned out – for the survival of Christian credibility in an increasingly secular, multifaceted European society.

Postage stamp issued by several European countries, commemorating the 100th anniversary of the invention of radio by Guglielmo Marconi in 1895.

Thus, the bridges between the roots of faith and the achievements of the sciences remained intact, and modern Europe is not the less for them. Some of the stages are exemplified by people like the French mathematician Blaise Pascal (1623–1662), the British astronomer and physicist Isaac Newton (1643–1727), the Italian physicist and engineer Guglielmo Marconi (1874–1937, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1909), or the German mathematician and physicist Albert Einstein (1879–1955), who won the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1921. They are just four examples of Europeans who personified the continuity of original, Judaeo-Christian values reaching beyond the confines of a purely scientific approach.

Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth,
Foiled by these rebel powers that thee array,
Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth,
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay ?

Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend ?
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,
Eat up thy charge ? Is this thy body's end ?

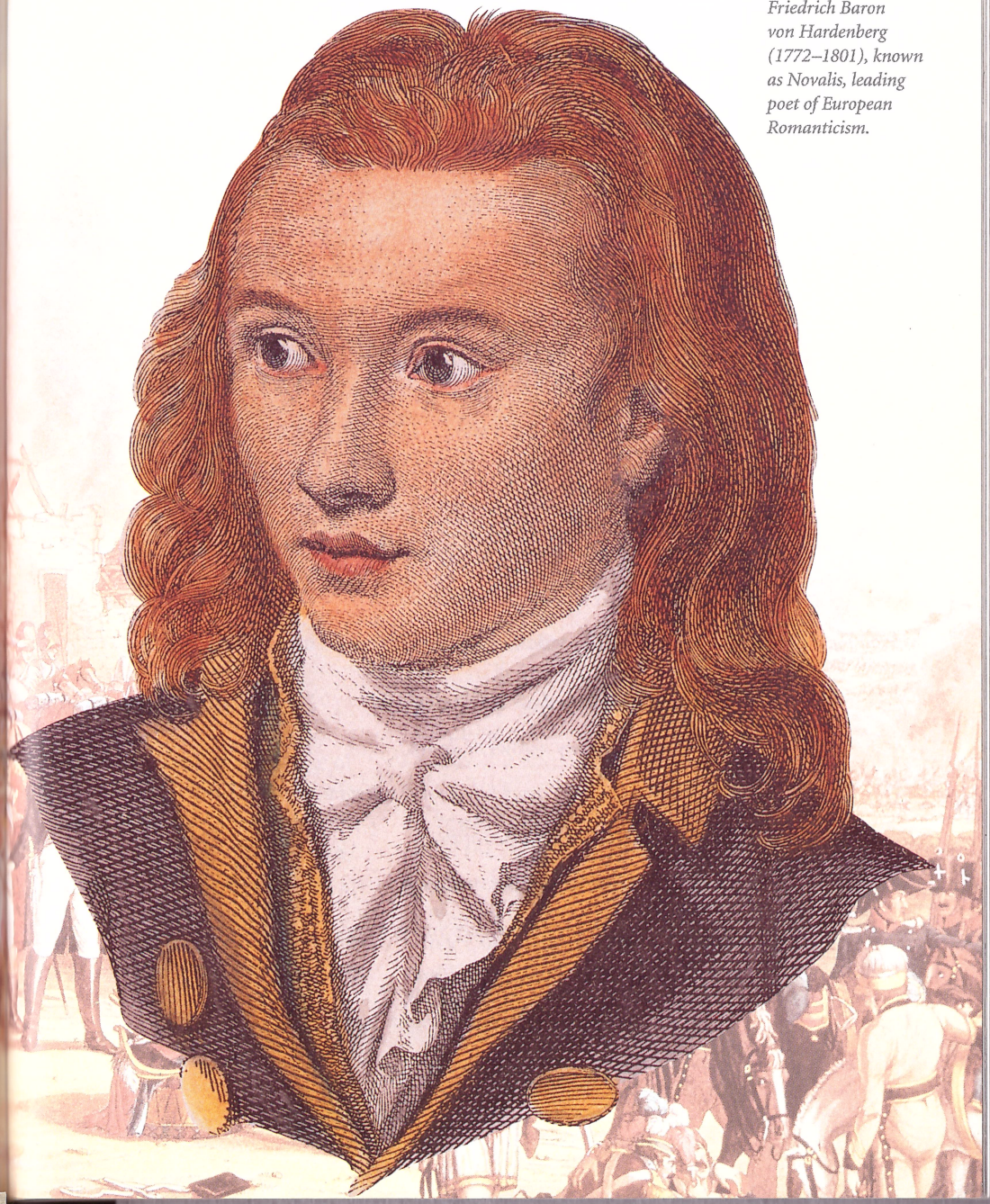
Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy store;
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;
Within be fed, without be rich no more.

So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on men,
And, Death once dead, there's no more dying then.

William Shakespeare,
Sonnet 146, 1609

The Europe of Enlightenment, the Europe of Faith, the Europe of Reforms: Social, economic and cultural processes stimulate a general awareness of freedom and democracy.

VIII. Yearning for Europe



Friedrich Baron von Hardenberg (1772–1801), known as Novalis, leading poet of European Romanticism.

There was an immense drive for America at the beginning of the 18th century, because everyone who found life inconvenient on our side hoped to create his sphere of freedom over there. .. Our host, who had come to Europe as a young man, was in a different position; this inestimable culture, born, grown, extended, subdued, pressed, but never fully suppressed, breathing again, reviving, and still standing out in endless activities, it gave him completely different ideas about what mankind can reach.

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE,
WILHELM MEISTERS WANDERJAHRE, 1821

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green ?
And was the holy lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen ?
And did the countenance divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills ?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among those dark satanic mills ?

Bring me my bow of burning gold !
Bring me my arrows of desire !
Bring me my spear ! O clouds, unfold !
Bring me my chariot of fire !
I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

WILLIAM BLAKE, JERUSALEM, 1804

Frederick II, known as Frederick the Great (1712–1786), King of Prussia, with François Marie Arouet, known as Voltaire (1694–1778), French philosopher amd poet. Collotype after a gouache of c. 1900.

The Industrial Society and the Social Reformers, Hopes and Conflicts

The promises of the Age of Enlightenment gave rise to hopes and specific expectations for Europe's future – from René Descartes (1596–1650) in France ("I think, therefore I am") to the German Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz (1646–1716) with his often misconstrued statement that this world is the best of all worlds, from François-Marie Arouet, better known as Voltaire (1694–1778), who travelled England and Prussia, his native France and Switzerland, to Jean-Jacques Rousseau from Geneva. But what could these hopes be founded on? Was it the jettisoning of old structures, of the authority of the church, or, finally, with the French Revolution, of the powers of the aristocracy? Or was it rather a new perspective than the abolition of the old establishment? Prussia's king Frederick the Great tried to express his own hopes and his reasons for them in a letter to

Period illustrations of the French Revolution:

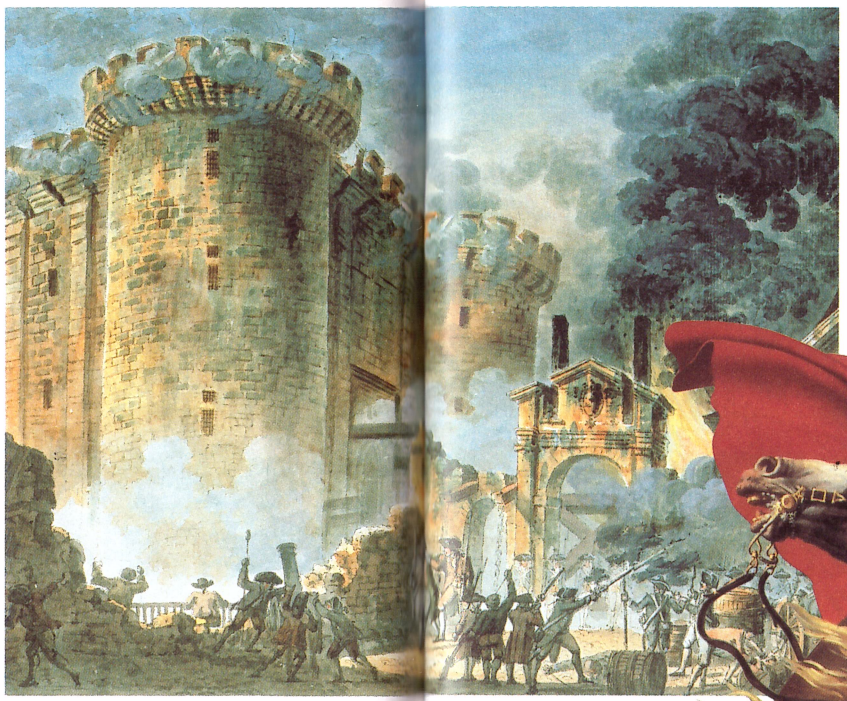
Above: A peasant carries a nobleman and a cleric on his back – a caricature of the corporate state.

Below: Liberty, equality, brotherly love – or death. War of the First Coalition, 1792–1799. Poster printed in Alsatia, 1792.

Voltaire, dated 24 July 1775. It was written at his favourite palace Sanssouci in Potsdam, which Voltaire knew well, and it focusses on the hope for a Franco-European influence on Germany's culture:

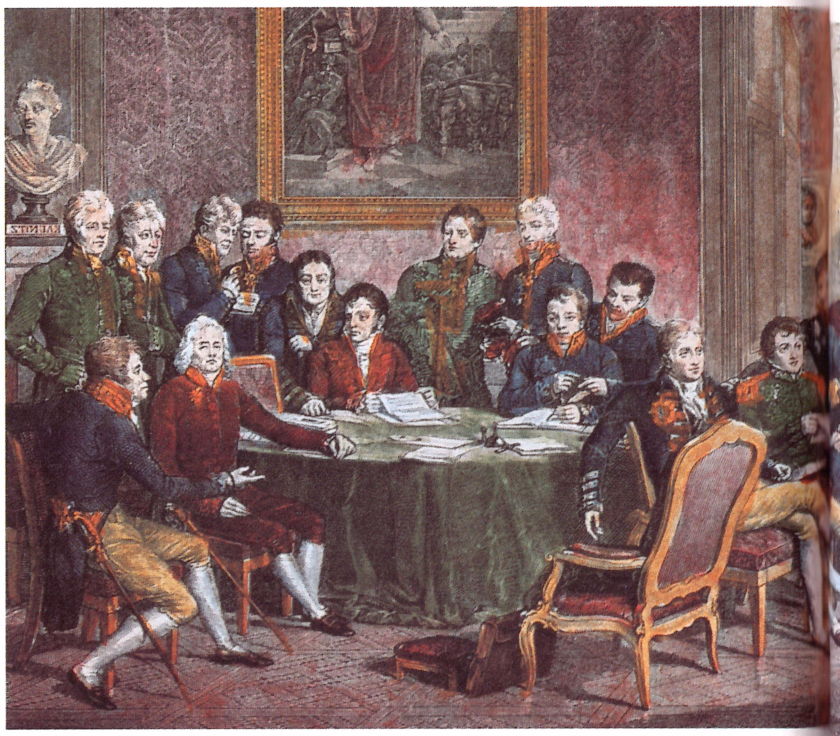
"Our Germans, too, are now so ambitious that they want to acquire the advantages of good literature; they want to emulate Athens, Rome, Florence and Paris. But however much I love my fatherland, I cannot say that they have yet succeeded. They are lacking two things: Language and taste. Their best works are those about public law. No one has looked to philosophy since the days of Leibniz and that fat monad Wolff. Germany has just reached the stage where France was during the reign of François I. The taste for education and knowledge is increasing, and one will have to wait for nature to give birth to true geniuses, as at the time of Richelieu and Mazarin. The soil which brought forth a Leibniz may still breed others. I shall not live to see the times which will be happy ones for my fatherland, but foresee the possibility that it will happen. You will object to this that this would be of no interest to you and that I can easily play the prophet by extending the deadline as far as possible. But this happens to be my kind of prophecy, and it is the safest of all, since no one can prove me wrong. I console myself with being a contemporary of Voltaire's, and that is enough for me. Three cheers for him! I wish him a good digestion and good spirits. But above all, may he not forget the recluse of Sanssouci."

Indeed, in the years after Frederick's death (1786), radical changes took place in Europe. Two examples taken from the same year, 1789, shall serve to highlight the different attitudes and the different directions, particularly in the early stages: In France, the capture of the Bastille was the signal for the French Revolution, and in England, the first modern factory was being built – the beginning of another revolution, the industrial one. It was an era where no one would have dared express a sense of "We in Europe". The rise of Napoleon and his military campaigns across Europe lead to a first united front: the so-called Wars of Liberation against Napoleon resulted in unexpected alliances, like the one between the English and the Prussian forces which sealed the fate of Napoleon in the battle of Waterloo (or 'Belle Alliance') in 1815. The English have named London's biggest railway station after it, and the Germans even invented a proverbial saying of Wellington's: "I wish it were night, or the Prussians would come".



The storming of the Bastille, 14 July 1789. Contemporary watercolour by J.P. Houel.

Napoleon. Painting by Jacque Louis David, 1800.



Congress of Vienna, 1814–1815. Conference of the plenipotentiaries of the eight signatory powers of the Peace of Paris. Coloured wood engraving, after a chalk drawing by Jean-Baptiste Isabey, 1814/1815.

Europe's liberation in form of an anecdote – it quite suited the mood of a time which tackled the task of reorganizing the political structures of the continent so enterprisingly at the Congress of Vienna, that people coined the phrase "The Congress dances". This, at any rate, is an authentic saying, derived from the Austrian Field Marshall Prince Ligne who mocked the tactics of the European allies: "The Congress makes no progress, but it dances." At least, it danced to the tunes of the newly introduced Viennese Waltz which, from this time on, itself conquered Europe.

Another consequence of the Congress of Vienna was the last large-scale attempt to create a European Federation in the mould of western, Christian culture, science and constitutional theories: the "Holy Alliance" which came into being, in September 1815, as a declaration of intent by the monarchs of Prussia, Austria, and Russia. A Protestant, a Roman-Catholic and an Orthodox state joined together in this intent and tried to recruit others. And in fact, with the exception of Britain and the Holy See in Rome, all European states joined this declaration of intent. However, the non-accession of Britain prevented its success – too far apart were the political interests between the northwestern and eastern "ends" of Europe: On the one side, Britain was industrializing herself with ruthless efficiency and was preoccupied with the safeguarding of her status as the leading naval power which demanded quite different alliances; Christian traditions, let alone Christian ethical prerogatives, had no official place in this strategy. On the other side, the Russian Tzar, Alexander I, proclaimed the Christian renewal of Europe but saw it as a means to his end of safeguarding his own power base and his territorial supremacy on the continent.

The Congress dances. Anonymous French caricature of the Congress of Vienna.

Battle of Waterloo, 18 June 1815. The allied Prussian and British forces defeat Napoleon I. Attack of the Scottish Highlanders. Painting by Elizabeth Butler (1850–1933).

All this did not amount to favourable conditions for a forward-looking European Union. And it was equally conterproductive that the Holy Alliance insisted on the outdated monarchic doctrine of divine right, which had just been demolished by the French Revolution. Trying to turn the clock back has never been an advisable common denominator for prospective allies and partners. Before the "Holy

Pope John XXIII, a pope of change and renewal. He initiated the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) which modernized the Roman-Catholic Church and encouraged ecumenical activities between the Christian churches.

Alliance" collapsed, one of the great European romantics, Friedrich Baron von Hardenberg, who called himself Novalis (1772–1801), had devised an unpolitical vision of Europe which is being rediscovered as a stimulating utopia without the shadow of power politics. In his essay of 1800, "Christianity and Europe", he stated that the consequences of Reformation and Counter-Reformation had driven Europe into a process of self-destruction. And he went on:

"Christendom must come back to life and effectiveness again and must form for itself, once again, a visible Church with no consideration for national boundaries, a Church which will take in all souls that thirst for the heavenly and which is willingly ready to become a mediator between the old world and the new. This Church must once again empty the horn of plenty over the peoples. From the holy heart of a European council, Christianity will rise again, und the task of a religious awakening will be pursued according to an all-encompassing, divine plan. Then, no-one will protest against ecclesiastical and secular coercion, for the nature of the Church will be true freedom, and all necessary reforms will be pursued under her leadership, as peaceful and formal processes of the state."

The language of today's intellectuals is less florid, but not always less idealistic. And one can detect the underlying realization that even modern Europe would only be an unfinished hull without the constructive debate about such ideals.

A former general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, the liberal Swedish theologian Gunnar Staalsett, summed some of this up in 1989: "A Europe which is more than a common edifice, namely a real home, can only be built on a renewal of spiritual and moral values." And the Italian 'post-modern' philosopher Gianni Vattimo adds: "Europe is indeed a product of the history of Christianity – in this respect, Novalis is right. Herein lies the authenticity of the European tradition. But I would also assign secularization to this Christianity. Here I agree with a broad tradition of European thinking. Think of Jacques Maritain. His idea that the strength of Christianity results in the separation of the fate of the soul from the territory of the state, seems to be on the spot. Christianity is the strength of the individual as opposed to the power of the state. The process of secularization which has permeated our continent for several hundred years is a Christian and not an anti-Christian fact. In this sense, the function of Christianity today is formative when it is about defining the frame of the cultural identity of Europe. It has a say, as a factor in a social and cultural structuring of Europe: as a motor of seculariuation, of the autonomy

Un jour, quand
l'homme sera sage,
Lorsqu'on n'instruira
plus les oiseaux
par la cage,
Quand les sociétés
difformes sentiront
Dans l'enfant
mieux compris se
redresser leur front,
Que, des libres essors
ayant sondé
les règles,
On connaîtra
la loi de croissance
des aigles,
Et que le plein midi
rayonnera pour tous,
Savoir étant sublime,
apprendre sera doux.

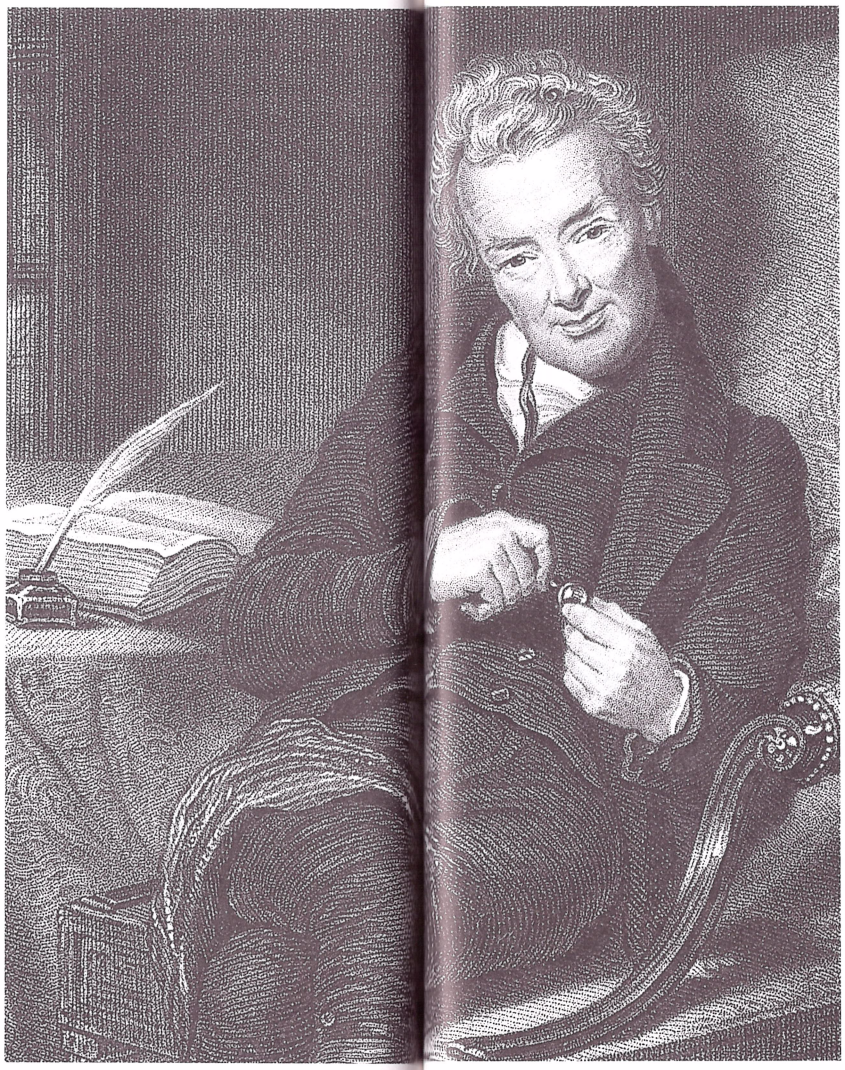
Victor Hugo,
Les Contemplations,
1856

* *English translation on p. 163.*

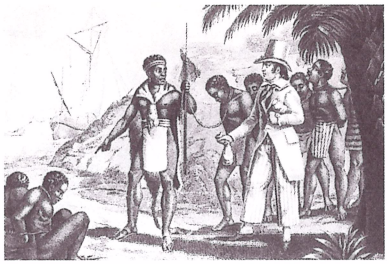
of the individual and of the differentiation between various areas of life. This is a great opportunity."

So said the philosopher Vattimo, an Aristotelean scholar with classsical training who sees himself in the tradition of Nietzsche and Heidegger. Another bridge on the horizon, the bridge of realism which leads from the romantic dream of Novalis on into a pluralistic society which does not exclude, but unites. But Gianni Vattimo would not have raised his voice, were it not for the disillusionments of the 19th century with their repercussions for the present. Vattimo himself puts one such disillusionment into words: "It is the turn of culture when basic needs and requirements have been satisfied. Intellectuals are not primarily obliged to make a start. It is rather their function to accompany and to humanize certain processes which would otherwise be merely material."

It may be arguable whether Vattimo is right or not. But we can see that many European thinkers have behaved like this, above all during the period of industrialization and during the processes which led to the World Wars of the 20th century, and that this had its consequences. The all too justified hopes for growing prosperity and a sphere of life to be enjoyed in freedom and social security were, by and large, expressed without intellectual, let



William Wilberforce (1759–1833), English philanthropist and politician. On his initiative, the British House of Commons passed the Abolition of Slavery act which prohibited slave trade between Africa and other overseas territories under British rule. In 1833, slavery was abolished in Britain.



Buying slaves in West Africa, 1820.

alone spiritual guidance. Small wonder then that exceptions are gratefully acknowledged by those who realize the deficiencies of a purely materialsitic worldview. Such exceptions can be found, above all, in the cradle of the industrial revolution, England; they were soon emulated elsewhere in Europe.
A name that comes to mind immediately is William Wilberforce (1759–1833), who fought for the abolition of the slave trade, in spite of the political and economical climate of his time, and who was one of those who managed to put an end to slavery in the whole of the British Empire in 1833. In the French and Danish colonies, by comparison, this did not happen until 1848, in the Dutch colonies it took until 1863, and in the Spanish colonies until 1870. While there was social progress in Europe and its dependencies, outside Europe civil liberties and human dignity were not brought within the social, Christian framework of Wilberforce and his circle until much later. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, signed at the UNO, still had to specify, 115 years after

Africa in 1885: Slave hunters raid a village.

Johann Hinrich Wichern (1808–1881), founder of the „Home Mission".

the death of Wilberforce, "that no one must be kept in slavery or serfdom; slavery and slave trade must be forbidden in all its forms."

And a second example: the politician and social reformer Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury (1801–1885). He saw to it that the often subhuman conditions in factories and mines were humanized, and he initiated legislation in favour of welfare services for the poor and needy. Even today, several organizations which continue to work in his spirit, are named after him, among them the "Shaftesbury Homes", founded in 1843, looking after families and children in need, and, since 1844, the "Shaftesbury Society" which offers accomodation and education to physically and mentally handicapped people and works in the inner cities; and, more recently established, in 1970, the "Shaftesbury Housing Association" which provides homes and care for old and physically handicapped people and others in need.

Partly independently, partly inspired by what was happening in Britain, the German theologian Johann Hinrich Wichern (1808–1881), drew his own consequences from the less pleasant concomitants of industrialization and growing inner cities. He founded relief institutions and worked for a reform of the penal system. Wichern, a Protestant theologian, combined this social work with the proclamation of the Christian faith. But he did it openmindedly, crossing all denominational and party-political boundaries. His approach was truly ecumenical and, quite literally, bridge-building. It was a hallmark of many other mould-breaking social reformers in Europe.

Eating house for children in Berlin, 1903.

Most of the greatest evils that man has inflicted upon man have come through people feeling quite certain about something which, in fact, was false. To know the truth is more difficult than most men suppose, and to act with ruthless determination in the belief that truth is the monopoly of their party is to invite disaster. Long calculations that certain evil in the present is worth inflicting for the sake of some doubtful benefit in the future are always to be reviewed with suspicion, for, as Shakespeare says: 'What's to come is still unsure.'

BERTRAND RUSSELL,
UNPOPULAR ESSAYS, 1950

If European humanism has become incapable of a valiant rebirth of its ideas, if it is no longer able to form a pugnacious, lively picture of its own soul, it will perish, and there will be a Europe which will carry its name in an exclusively historical manner, and it would be preferable to shelter oneself from it in the uninvolved-timeless.

THOMAS MANN,
ACHTUNG EUROPA !, 1938

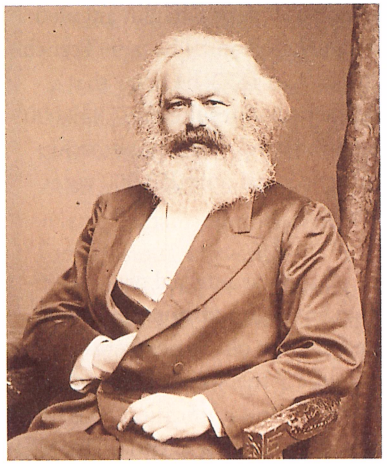
„Thinning out a timber forest" – contemporary caricature of the German Customs Union, 1 January 1834.

From Crises into Wars: The Dream of National Supremacy becomes a Nightmare

Without doubt, it was a time of new departures. Friedrich List's theory of political economics led to the German Customs Union of 1834 for which all those countless German principalities and states gave up their boundaries, and frontiers continued to exist only at the external borders of the Union. All of a sudden, there were only two great economic blocs in the centre of Europe: The German Customs Union, and the territory of the Habsburg Monarchy. A union-wide railway network was devised and became a reality. Then, in 1860, the so-called Cobden Treaty between France and Britain created the first European free trade area. It was progress, visibly but slowly. Even slower was the pace with which interior social developments were trying to keep up with industrial and economic progress: too slow for many people from Britain to Austria. In demonstrations, in petitions and rebellions, they demanded far-reaching reforms of universal suffrage and of constitutions. In short, they demanded a complete democratization of society. This atmosphere was understood and utilized by two men

who had gained their own personal experiences in Manchester, Brussels and other European cities: the wealthy industrialist Friedrich Engels and the impoverished journalist Karl Marx. Together and on behalf of the Communist Congress in London, they drafted a manifesto which was made public in 1847, and which made a pan-European claim:

"The workers have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to gain. Workers of the world, unite !" These are the famous last words of the Communist Manifesto, but it was not merely about the working proletariat. The authors are in fact proud of their heritage and lay claim to a venerable, European pedigree. As socialists, they say, they are proud to be descended not only from Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen, but also from Kant, Fichte and Hegel. The labour movement is, according to Marx and Engels, the heir to classical German philosophy. One may differ, certainly with the benefit of hindsight, but the extent to which ideal and reality parted company here can be seen in the revolutions of 1848 in Paris, Vienna and Berlin, the ensuing reaction, the Russian October Revolution of 1919, the excesses of Communism not only in Europe, the division of Europe by what Churchill proverbially called the Iron Curtain, the radical changes brought about by the student unrest of 1968, and finally the collapse of European Communism in the late 1980s and early 1990s.



Karl Marx (1818–1883), one of the founding fathers of communism and initiator of Marxism, a philosophical system which has also been called historical or dialectical materialism.

Left: October Revolution. The storming of the Winter Palace at St Petersburg, 7 November 1917. Painting by Vassili Surikov.

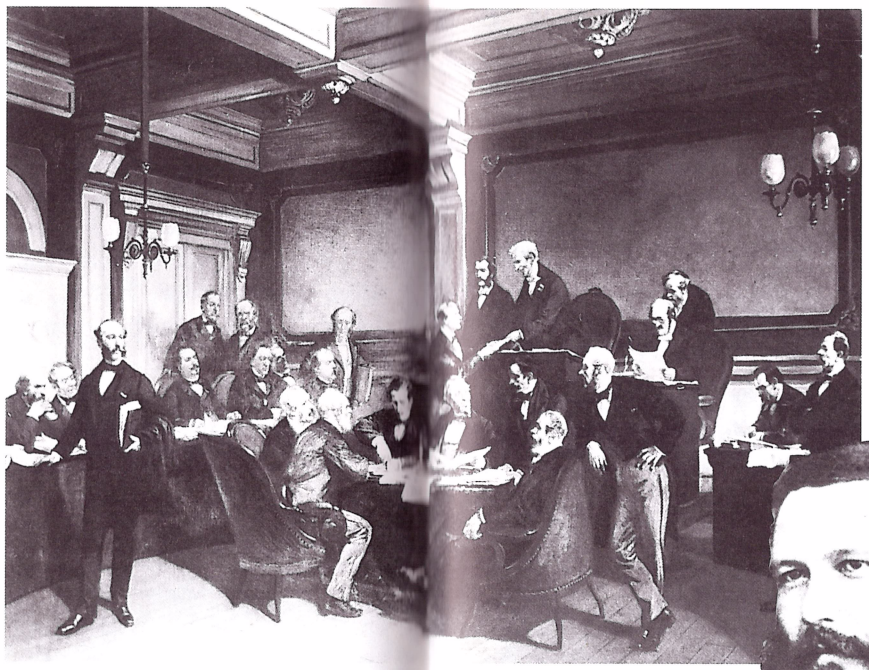
The often accurate insights of the pragmatist Engels, shared by others – non-Communists among them – before and after him, quite literally became a red rag for many movements which demanded civil liberties and human rights without wanting the suprastructure of a divisive philosophical theory and the means it was ready to employ. People and movements who should have been natural allies became mortal enemies all over Europe. This growth in radicalism which had led to undisguised acts of terrorism in many cities as early as 1848, made it easy for the powers of restoration to counter with brute force, so as to reestablish the "old order". Surprisingly, a majority of the population accepted this in spite of all the retrograde social and

At the moment, it seems that rather the world would perish than that one of the great European nations would renounce its claim to primacy. Another fratricidal war in Europe, and the time will have come when we will infect the world only with our miasmas. Are there so few who are able to read the writing on the wall, the writing of our contemporary art and music? So few who are capable of reflecting about the death of the so infinitely European 'melody'?

Carl J. Burckhardt, Letter to Hugo von Hofmannsthal, 1922

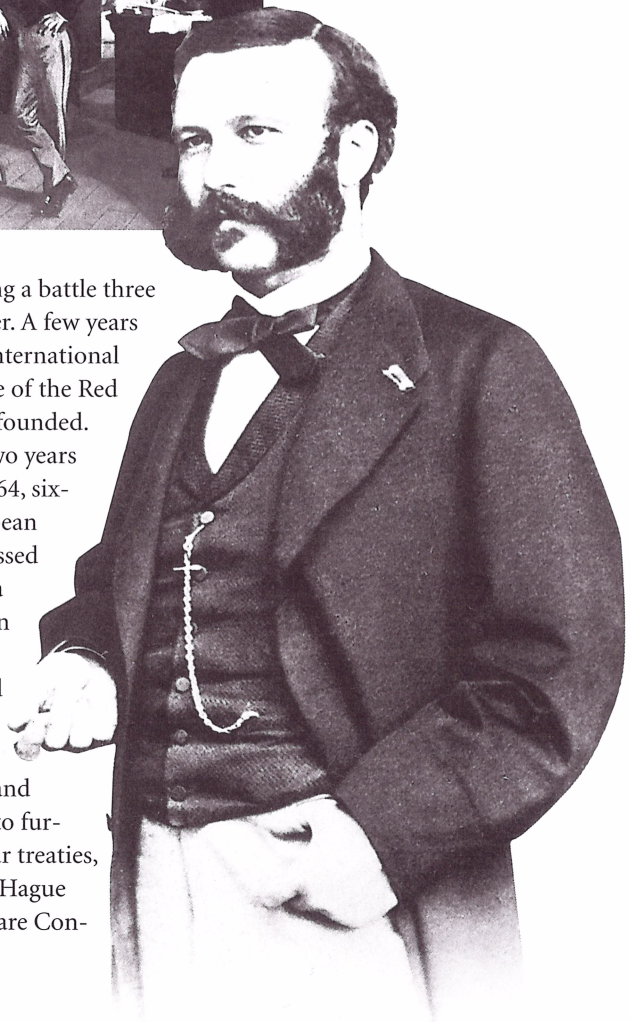
democratic steps which it entailed: When Napoleon III became French Emperor in 1852, he knew that a plebiscite had resulted in 7,839,000 votes in favour of an emperorship in France, and only 253,000 votes against.

As soon as internal order seemed to have been safeguarded along the old lines, old scores were settled abroad. Partnership, European co-operation and unification had disappeared from the agenda. That dream of Austria's Count Schwarzenberg, the establishment of a new Austro-German Empire in the centre of Europe, under the leadership of the Habsburg Monarchy, was discussed and was duly shipwrecked on the rock of the disputed common constitution. The blocs remained intact – the British, the French, the Germans – under Prussian leadership –, Austrians with their dependencies, Russia. It was merely a question of time when little local difficulties caused by controversial territorial claims would result in major skirmishes and in outright wars between individual nations, and, finally, between the blocs themselves. Problems of national self-definition also played a part: The Italians had freed themselves from Austrian hegemony in a series of military conflicts between 1859 and 1861, and when King Victor Emmanuel opened the first parliament and proclaimed Italy a free state, a new colour was added to the European map of independent nations, and a new voice demanded to be heard in Europe.



Inaugural assembly of the Red Cross in Geneva, 22 August 1864.

The military corollaries of those Italian wars of liberation resulted in yet another European innovation – and this time, it was a truly beneficial one: the foundation of the Red Cross. "Should it not be possible to establish relief organizations in all European countries, in order to let voluntary helpers nurse the injured in times of war, irrespective of ethnic origin?" Henri Dunant of Geneva asked this question in 1862, in his book "Un souvenir de Solferino" (Memories of Solferino) where he had seen abandoned casualties, soldiers dying, without help, on the battlefield, during a battle three years earlier. A few years later. the International Committee of the Red Cross was founded. Another two years later, in 1864, sixteen European nations passed the Geneva Convention which guaranteed the protection of casualties and which led to further, similar treaties, and to the Hague Land Warfare Convention which settled the treatment of prisoners of war. Thanks to such treaties and conventions, it has become possible to deal with violations and war crimes committed today, such as those in the former Yugoslavia. Henri Dunant, who was a man without illusions, knew that his initiatives would not prevent war, but he also knew that they would help to alleviate its side effects and its consequences. In 1901, he was the first to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.



Jean Henri Dunant (1828–1910), Swiss philanthropist and founder of the International Red Cross.

Old Europe disappears in two World Wars, the Holocaust destroys one of the roots of European civilization. Great Europeans like Robert Schuman, Alcide de Gasperi and Konrad Adenauer, prepare the ground for a new beginning: for the Europe we can all help to form.

IX. The Future of Freedom

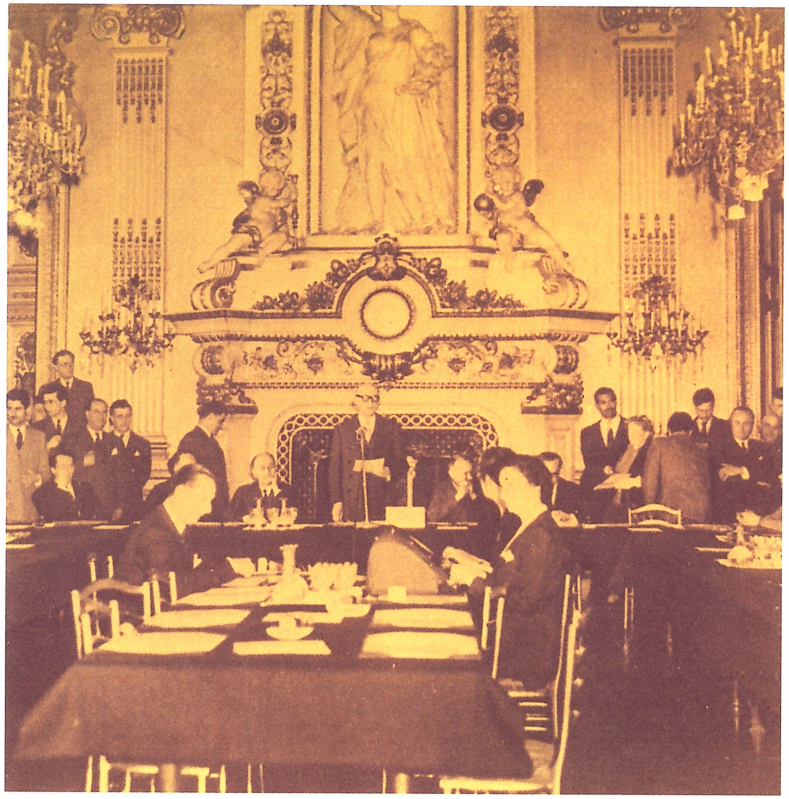
Konrad Adenauer (1876–1967), first chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, 1949–1963. From 1917 to 1933, he had been mayor of Cologne, until his imprisonment by Hitler.

Is it so certain that Europe is in decline, that it gives up its rule and abdicates ? Should this seeming decline not rather be a salutary crisis, which permits Europe to become truly Europe? Was not the obvious decay of Europe's nations an unavoidable necessity, if one day the United States of Europe should come into being and Europe's variety should be replaced by a true unity ?

JOSÉ ORTEGA Y GASSET,
LA REBELIÓN DE LAS MASAS, 1930

A friend came to see me on one of the evenings of the last week - he thinks it was on Monday, August 3rd. We were standing at a window of my room in the Foreign Office. It was getting dusk, and the lamps were being lit in the space below. ... My friend recalls that I remarked on this with the words, 'The lamps are going out all over Europe: we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime.

EDWARD GREY (VISCOUNT GREY OF FALLODON),
TWENTY-FIVE YEARS 1892-1916, 1925



An event which changed post-war Europe: On 9 May 1950, the French foreign minister Robert Schuman announced the plan of his government to establish a Franco-German coal and steel union. It was the first step towards the European Economical Community.

Guilt and atonement, beginnings and achievements

"As a rule, public opinion only understands the mistakes committed in foreign politics, when it can look back upon the history of a lifetime." Thus wrote Bismarck, at the end of his autobiographical "Thoughts and Memories". And he added: "It is the task of politics to predict, as accurately as possible, what others will do under given circumstances. The ability to foresee this will seldom be sufficiently innate, to such an extent that there must also be a certain degree of business experience and knowledge of human nature to become effective. And I cannot resist worrying impressions when I consider to what an extent these abilities have been lost in our leading circles." On the eve of the First World war, this man who had himself conducted politics by means of war, with the Danish War in 1864, against Austria in 1866, or in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870/1871, may have been right. In a way, it was already too late. Too late not least because at this stage, after

Berlin, 28 August 1914: Departure of troops in mufti, from a railway station in Berlin.

Bismarck's dismissal as Chancellor by Emperor Wilhelm II, the arming of the new military superpower was already fully underway.

The principle of mutual mistrust ruled in Europe during the decades either side of the turn of the century. And once again, the rift had grown between, on one side, the enterprising sciences, productive contacts between the arts, literature and music, and, on the other side, the entrenched positions of governments, parties and other interests. A well-known example of this was the cultural struggle which gave rise to one of the few words of the German language that have been included in English dictionaries: "Kulturkampf". As one of them defines it: "The struggle of the Prussian state against the Roman Catholic Church (1872–87), which took the form of laws designed to bring education, marriage, etc., under the control of the state." This Prussian struggle became so popular in Protestant Europe – particularly in Britain –, because it was based on the simplifying assumption that a foreigner (the Pope was an Italian), and indeed a foreign head of state, must not be allowed to rule over the attitudes, the civic duties and the social integrity of the people of another country, by demanding their unswerving allegiance. The Pope proved the point by declaring Prussian church laws null and void, and

the state imprisoned or exiled several bishops. One of the relics of a similar cultural and political conflict in Britain is the rule still forbidding the English monarch to marry a Roman-Catholic. Elsewhere in Europe, traditional privileges granted to one particular religion may still limit the freedom of the adherents of other faiths to attain high office. One can see in this the elements of a debate about the spiritual nature of Europe: is it – still – Christian, and if so, is it

Catholic, Protestant, or ecumenical; or if not, how open can it be to creeds beyond the "many mansions" of Christianity ?

There was no European consensus which could have prevented the impending catastrophe. In fact, even the "Entente cordiale" between France and Britain, in 1904, was hardly European in the sense of contributing to a wider communion, – nor were the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria in 1908 and the occupation of Tripolis by Italy. Alliances and reinsurance treaties of one with or against the other had replaced other greater, common perspectives which should have been of overriding importance. Europe abondo-

A casualty is taken into an ambulance of the French Army, photograph, c. 1915.

ned herself and found herself in the First World War, the "Great War".

German soldier killed in action, with hand grenade, c. 1915.

The victorious powers failed to create a lasting post-war order after 1918, an order which might have been forward-looking both geographically and economically. Individual countries relapsed into their old nationalist ways, and Germany, in particular, was too weak (and too weak-willed) to prevent the downfall of the Weimar Republic and the rise of the National Socialist regime.

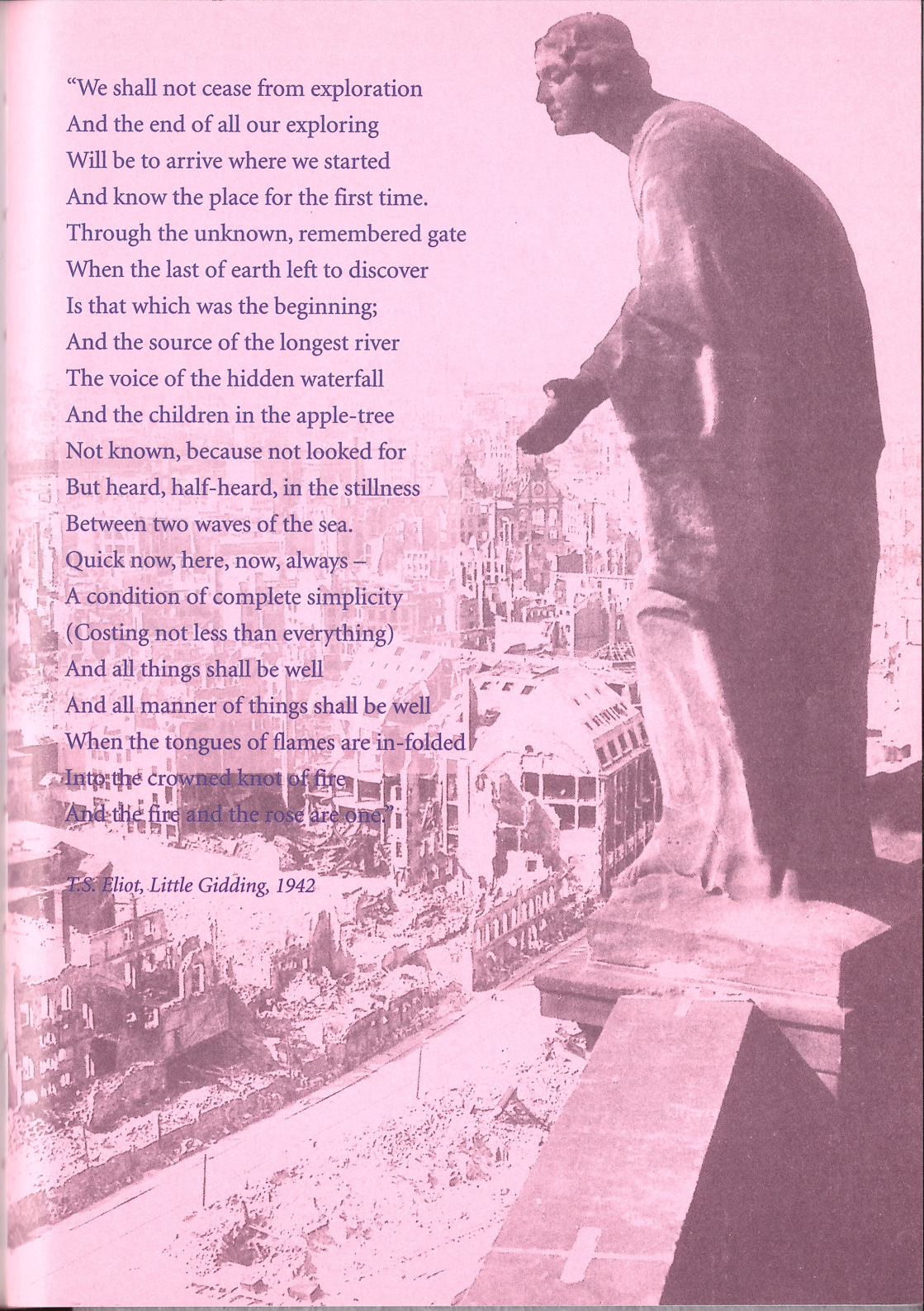
Children in a concentration camp.

Europe had become, and had remained fragile; its structures were crumbling. Hitler recklessly benefited from these circumstances and led Europe into a second World War.

Among all the wilful reciprocal destruction of cities, with their people and their cultural heritage, like Rotterdam, Spa, Monte Cassino, Coventry, Warsaw, or Dresden, the National Socialist politics of extermination of the Jews embodies the destructive urge of people who have removed the thin layer of civilization.

The perversion of our European heritage was expressed in brutal clarity by the Nazi dictum that the Jews were the undoing of Germany and Europe, and of the whole world. A minimum of European education would have been sufficient to convince even the simplest backwoodsman that the opposite was true.

European civilization and culture are unthinkable without the Jews and their role from antiquity onwards, and without the Jewish formatives within Christianity. European integrity must be defined not least in terms of the normality of Jewish life in all European countries.



"We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
Through the unknown, remembered gate
When the last of earth left to discover
Is that which was the beginning;
And the source of the longest river
The voice of the hidden waterfall
And the children in the apple-tree
Not known, because not looked for
But heard, half-heard, in the stillness
Between two waves of the sea.
Quick now, here, now, always –
A condition of complete simplicity
(Costing not less than everything)
And all things shall be well
And all manner of things shall be well
When the tongues of flames are in-folded
Into the crowned knot of fire
And the fire and the rose are one."

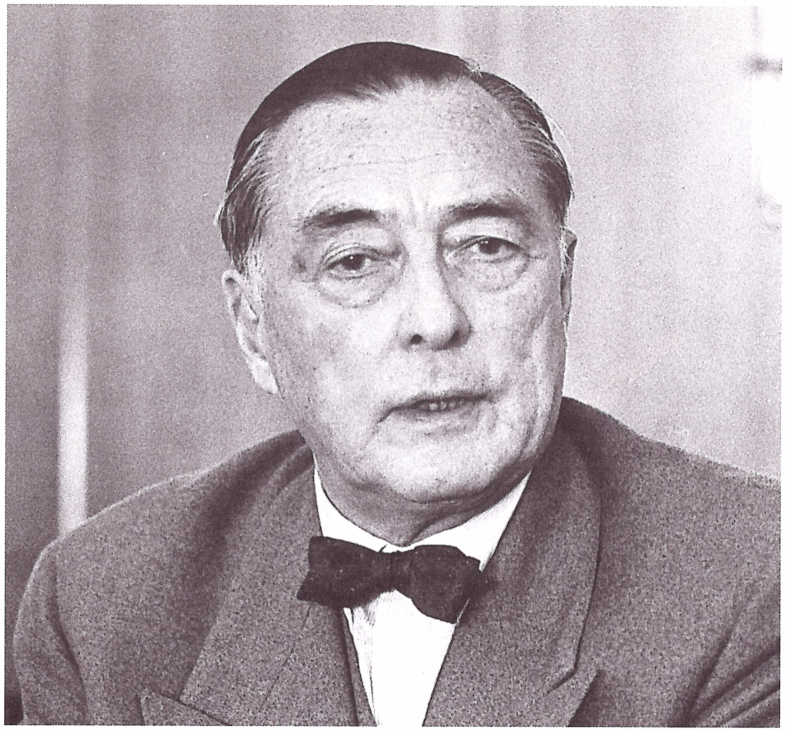
T.S. Eliot, Little Gidding, 1942

We must proclaim the mission and the design of a United Europe whose moral conception will win the respect and gratitude of mankind, and whose physical strength will be such that none will dare molest her tranquil sway. ... I hope to see a Europe where men and women of every country will think of being European as of belonging to their native land, and wherever they go in this wide domain will truly feel 'Here I am at home'.

WINSTON CHURCHILL,
SPEECH AT THE CONGRESS OF EUROPE,
THE HAGUE, MAY 7-10, 1948

Conscious of their responsibilty before God and humankind, animated by the resolve to serve world peace as an equal part of a united Europe, the German people have adopted, by virtue of their constituent power, this Basic Law.

PREAMBLE TO THE BASIC LAW (GRUNDGESETZ)
OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, 1949/1990.



Richard Count Coudenhove-Kalergi (1894–1972), political writer and founder of the Pan-European Movement.

We are Europe – for us, for others

"Continental Europe, from Portugal to Poland, will either join together in a supranational form, or it will perish, politically, economically and culturally, in the course of this century." A twenty-eight year old made these remarks, as early as 1922: Richard Count Coudenhove – Calergi (1894–1972), the founder of the Pan-European Union. After the First World War, and particularly in his book "Pan-Europe" of 1922, he had promoted the idea of a Europe without borders, a guarantor of peace. Coudenhove himself, the son of Austrian and Japanese parents, had lost his Habsburgian homeland in 1918 and decided to be nothing but a European. Pan-Europe, that is the all-encompassing Europe, this was the new fatherland. Pan-European congresses with high-ranking participants from political parties and national governments appeared to concur with his line, but nothing concrete happened. Then, in 1933, Hitler came to power, and Coudenhove's fears of what to expect in the case of the failure of a supranational State of Europe came true: The old continent was devastated politically,

The French foreign minister Robert Schuman (left), the German chancellor Konrad Adenauer (right), and the German permanent secretary Walter Hallstein in Bonn, on the occasion of the signing of the treaty of Germany with the USA, Great Britain, and France in Bonn, on 26 May 1952.

economically and culturally in six years of mutual destruction.

In 1945, when people emerged from the ruins of Europe, Coudenhove-Kalergi made anotherattempt. He met with Winston Churchill to advise him on European politics. But as the Western Allies were not ready yet to establish a European Parliament in their sphere of influence. Coudenhove took the initiative; he founded the European Union of Parliamentarians and succeeeded in providing the Council of Europe, newly established in 1949, with a parliamentarian structure – the first institution of its kind. His efforts did not remain unrewarded; he was the first to receive the most important political award in Europe, the "Karlspreis" of Aachen, named after Charlemagne. Coudenhove's activities were based on a sober insight which has become common currency since then : He had realized that we have to speak up for a Europe which is not founded onesidedly on the influence of the

technocrats and the power of the bureaucrats. Without cultural, intellectual and religious cooperation, there cannot be a Europe which actually works. And it follows that there could be some kind of European patriotism, a sense of community and public-spiritedness without discrimination of others, to give us an indentity from within that can be recognized from outside.

Such questions and considerations show us that these are not utopian ideas, but the realistic acceptance of tasks and problems. And while, at the close of the century, the list of unsolved problems is still longer than that of solved ones, the European realism and pragmatism inspired by Count Coudenhove-Kalergi and others has achieved a number of considerable results. We may single out the European Human Rights Convention of the 4th November 1950: For the first time, the basic rights of freedom of conscience and religious freedom, the fundamental rights of ownership and private life were defined and established. Something that had hitherto been mainly an ideal notion with limited applicability, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations, became an

Strasbourg, 7 August 1950: The Council of Europe meets for its second consultative session. Paul Henry Spaak (first president), Paul Reynaud and (centre) Winston Churchill.

left: The European Parliament today.

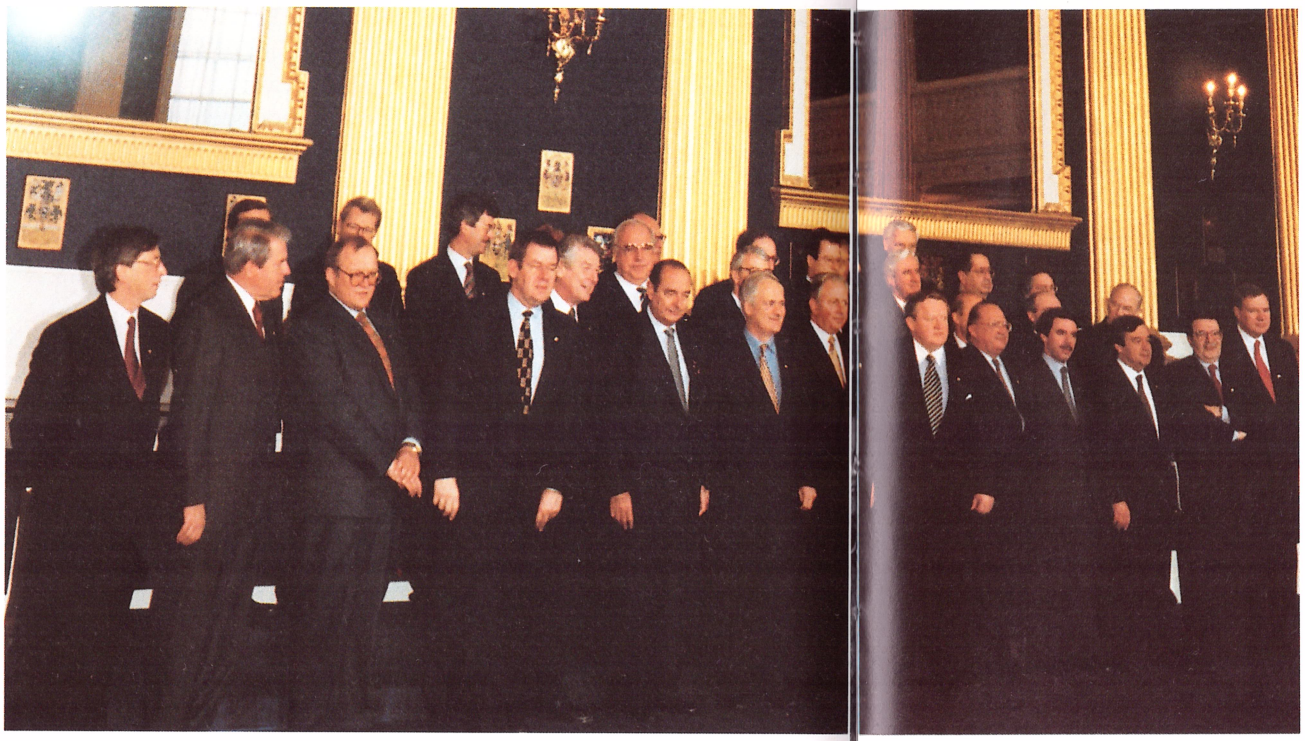
enforceable right. It was a beginning, and a signal, not least towards the countries behind Europe's "iron curtain". Human rights, which must never be separated from human responsibilities, remain an essential, basic element of Europe if it is to thrive on the diversity of traditions and characteristics.

We may well acknowledge that there are still all sorts of divergent opinions among the member states of the European Union, not to mention those European countries which are not part of it. Ecological questions, a common currency, dual nationalities, or the transfer of a number of rights from individual nations to a supranational European administration, the implementation of present and future "Maastricht" treaties – we all have our favourites, and our pet dislikes, and this will always be a matter of patience and a willingness to listen and to understand each other.

The French president, Charles de Gaulle, and the German chancellor Konrad Adenauer during High Mass at Reims Cathedral, July 1962. Adenauer's state visit to France symbolized the end of centuries of Franco-German conflicts and the beginning of lasting reconciliation.

German chancellor Helmut Kohl and French president François Mitterand in Heidelberg, 1994.

Meeting of the European Council in Dublin, 14 December 1996.



As early as 1949, the French philosopher and writer Jean-Paul Sartre, someone not suspected of nationalistic tendencies, called for the staying power needed to transform nationalism into a European spirit. From a French perspective, he wrote in "Politique étrangère", a journal published in Lausanne, Switzerland:

"If we want French culture to continue, it must be integrated into the frame of a great European culture. Of course, such a unity cannot establish itself on its own. One could certainly ask, as from today, the governments, associations and individuals, to establish such cultural politics. And one can of course encourage exchange, translations, contacts, one can pursue the politics of the book. One can even write international journals. All this has already been attempted before the war of 1939. Today, such actions which have not remained unnoticed, would be ineffective, because we would have a superstructure – that is, cultural unity –, but no unity on the grass roots levels would correspond to this superstructure. We are dealing here with the need to understand that the cultural unity of Europe is the only unity which is capable of protecting, close to its heart, what is valid in the cultures of each individual country. Only if we aim for a unity of European cultures, shall we be able to save French culture; but such a unity would be empty and meaningless talk if it were not put in the frame of a much more profound endeavour with the aim of realizing the economical and political unity of Europe."

Let us adapt this text to our individual nationalities, let us say "Portuguese" instead of French, or "Greek", "Hungarian", "Czech", "Polish", "Swedish", or "German", "Austrian", "British", "Swiss", or again "Irish", "Belgian", "Dutch", "Italian", "Spanish", let us say "Finnish", "Norwegian", "Bulgarian", "Russian", "Rumanian", "Lithuanian", "Estonian", "Latvian", "Ukrainian", "Byelorussian", or "Luxembourgeois" and "Liechtensteiner" – wherever we look, this multitude and variety is an obvious asset, and it looks even more impressive when we add cultural entities that do not form independent states, like the Sorbs, the Welsh, the Scots, the English, or the Basques and the Rhaetians.

"This Europe must be born. And she will, when Spaniards say 'our Chartres', Englishmen 'our Cracow', Italians 'our Copenhagen', and Germans 'our Bruges'. Then, Europe will live."

Salvador de Mandariaga, Speech at the Congress of Europe, The Hague, 7–10 May 1948

With every new state on the European map, and we have had quite a few new ones after the collapse of the Soviet Empire, the independence of the Baltic States, or after the separation of Czechoslovakia into the Czech and the Slovak Republic – , the challenges increase. But these are challenges which offer opportunities for the future; they cannot be a discouragement to anyone, with the exception of those who are afraid to learn the lesson of our past. In a sense,

Jacques Santer, President of the European Commission, Chancellor Helmut Kohl, and President Jacques Chirac.

we have come full circle when we realize that Christian symbols and elements have not been excluded, but do play a constructive role – sometimes in unexpected circumstances, as when the signature tune of 'Eurovision' programmes on television turns out to be the introduction to Marc-Antoine Charpentier's "Te Deum".

The basis for constructive optimism was laid in the early years after the Second World War, and four committed Europeans may perhaps be singled out as founding fathers of the union-to-be: The Briton Winston Churchill (1874–1965), who put the term of the "United States of Europe" on the agenda of post-war politics, with his much-quoted speech about Europe in Zurich, 1946; the Italian Alcide de Gasperi (1881–1954), the Frenchman Robert Schuman (1886–1963), and the German Konrad Adenauer (1876–1967). Schuman above all, the man who had paved the way towards a European Union with his plan for the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community, personified the clear-sighted creative power of post-war Europe. The will to create something new, a common ground, was of course more than an idealistic vision. Embittered enemies had to become partners and trusted friends, hate and mistrust had to be turned into profound trust and understanding. Schuman himself put it like this: "Europe cannot be created at one stroke, and not by a simple bringing together: It will come about through concrete facts which, first of all, establish a solidarity of action. The unification of European nations demands that the centuries-old differences between France and Germany must be terminated."

Schuman was supported by a fortunate constellation: he found his partners in Konrad Adenauer, first chancellor of the German Federal Republic, and in the Italian prime minister Alcide de Gasperi. All three of them were linked in that they were all committed Christians, and they all came from inner-European border areas, where people had always had a chance to meet other cultures. Adenauer had grown up in Cologne, Schuman in Lorraine, and de Gasperi in the Trentino. In fact, de Gasperi was even born an Austrian and had been a member of the Austrian "Reichsrat" chamber between 1911 and 1918. When his native land was absorbed into Italy, after the end of the First World War, he continued his political career, was elected to the Parliament in Rome, opposed Mussolini's Fascism (and was briefly imprisoned), helped to found the 'Democrazia Cristiana' and, as prime minister from 1945 to 1953, was one of the most influential and pioneering personalities of Italian and above all of European politics. His own biographical experience can be gleaned from the following, topical statement: "Europe will survive, and nothing will be lost of that which makes up the glory and the happiness of each individual nation."

Perhaps more than anything, the personal friendship between Schuman and Adenauer helped to reshape central Europe by overcoming the arch enmity between France and Germany. Their relationship, and the input of likeminded politicians, underlines the importance of individual human convictions which, when put into action, give life to mere programmes and declarations. And it seems remarkable that these men "of the first

The Italian president Alcide de Gasperi (centre) with the first president of the Federal Republic of Germany, Theodor Heuss, and the first chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, at Villa Hammerschmidt, Bonn, September 1952.

Willy Brandt (1913–1992). Mayor of West Berlin 1957–1966, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany 1969–1974, Nobel Peace Prize 1971.

hour" drew courage not only from their political visions: Adenauer, in any case, wrote to Schuman, in 1950: "I would like to approach you directly as I believe that you and I may have been called by God to achieve something valuable for our common ideals, in this decisive situation." And in 1959, Robert Schuman declared before the members of the European Parliament, of which he was the first president: "Democracy owes its genesis and development to Christianity; it was born when man was called to ensure the dignity of the person in individual freedom, respect for the rights of others and neighbourly love for other people. In the age which preceded the Christian message, such fundamental tenets and ideas had never been formulated nor been the intellectual basis for any system of rule. Only Christianity granted the equality of all people, regardless of class or race, and it gave us the ethos of work, St Benedict's "ora et labora" ("pray and work"), passed on with the obligation to put it into practise as a service to God's Creation."

Much has happened since those founding days of post-war Europe. Others have grasped the baton, men like Willy Brandt (1913–1992), the first and so far the only German after 1945 to have been awarded (in 1971) the Nobel Peace Prize. Brandt, mayor of West-Berlin from 1957 to 1966, during the heyday of the "Cold War", and chancellor of the German Federal Republic from 1969 to 1974, was instrumental in creating the "Ostpolitik" (another of those rare German words that have crept into English dictionaries and encyclopedias), the policy of reconciliation between west and east, particularly with Poland and

EUROPEANS OLD AND NEW

Miguel de Cervantes (Spanish poet), Ludwig van Beethoven (German composer), Marie Curie (Polish-French physicist and chemist).

Luis de Camões (Portuguese poet), Antonin Dvořak (Czech composer), George Simenon (Belgian author).

Rembrandt (Dutch Painter), August Strindberg (Swedish dramatist), Virgil (Roman epic poet).

Samuel Beckett (Irish writer), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (Swiss-French philosopher), Béla Bartók (Hungarian composer).

EUROPEANS OLD AND NEW

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (Austrian composer), Søren Kierkegaard (Danish philosopher), William Shakespeare (English poet).

Henryk Sienkiewicz (Polish writer), Maria Theresa (Empress of Austria and social reformer), Henrik Ibsen (Norwegian dramatist).

Blaise Pascal (French mathematician and theologian), Plato (Greek philosopher), Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (German writer).

Jean Sibelius (Finnish composer), Sir Isaac Newton (English physicist and mathematician), Edward Steichen (Luxemburgian-American photographer).

the former Soviet Union, culminating in a "basic treaty", the "Grundlagenvertrag" with the other German state, the German Democratic Republic, which has now disappeared as a result of German reunification in 1990.

A few decades, even a few years ago, it would have been unthinkable that free nations would be prepared to give up old rights in order to create a durable union. Admittedly, it is a slow process, and some are taking part only hesitatingly. But it is happening, against all the odds, just as it became possible, beyond the hopes and expectations of most, for freedom and democracy to return to eastern Europe and become natural elements of public life. The will not to exclude anyone from the community of European nations is as tangible as is the visible attractiveness of a Europe which rests on many pillars, supporting one and the same roof.

Like a thread, the Christian foundations of Europe run through the statements of post-war European leaders, from Coudenhove-Calergi to Churchill, Adenauer, de Gasperi, Schuman, to Helmut Kohl and Vàclav Havel. This may be personal faith and conviction, but it also is based on historical knowledge and experience. And if the old cultural connections, the Graeco-Roman roots, are underlined by the same people, and by other great contributors to modern Europe, like François Mitterand or Gyula Horn, this, too, is a result of conviction and experience. Europe's cultural heritage, personified in the canonical classics like Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Virgil, Horace, and Ovid, in the philosophical tradition of Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and Seneca, remains an indispensable part of the whole. The Briton William Shakespeare is as much a part of the whole of Europe's heritage as is the Pole Marie Sklodowska, who won two Nobel Prizes as Marie Curie in France, or the Byelorussian Marc Chagall, the Italian Maria Montessori, the Belgian Georges Simenon, the Finn Jean Sibelius, the Hungarian Béla Bartók, the Dane Sören Kierkegaard or the German Ludwig van Beethoven whose "Ode to Joy" from his Ninth Symphony has become the inofficial European Anthem. If we make their acquaintance, study them, their times and their cultures, we shall find ourselves among those who want a truly united Europe:

A whole, united Europe, where it is not the size of the countries or their economical power which are the decisive factors, but the undivided willingness of their citizens, conscious of their past and of their common interests, to move towards each other in order to continue together.

Original Latin text of "Modus Ottine" on p. 65:

Bello fortis,
pace potens,
in utroque
tamen mitis,
inter triumphos,
bella, pacem
semper suos pauperes
respexerat.
Inde pauperum
pater fertur

Translation of French text on p 130:

"One day, when man will be wise,
When birds will no longer be reared by the cage,
When misformed societies will feel,
In the child which is better understood,
How they can rise their head again,
That, having examined the rules in free progress,
We will understand the law of the growing of wings,
And that the full midday sun will shine for all –
Then, knowledge will be sublime,
And learning will be sweet."

Picture Sources

Archiv für Kunst und Geschichte: p. 8 Sophie Scholl, John Donne, p.13 Europa, Stier, p. 15 Herodot, p. 17 Erdkarte nach Herodot, p. 18/19 Erdkarte, Plinius d. Ä., p. 23 Augustus, p. 25 Varusschlacht, p. 28 Röm. Karte, p. 28/29 Weinschiff, p. 29 Evangelist Lukas, p. 33 Paulus, p. 34 Platon, p. 35 Aristoteles, p. 41 Hagia Sophia, p. 42 Konstantin-Büste, p. 45 „Am Goldenen Horn", p. 50/51 Justitia-Skulptur, p. 57 Bonifatius, p. 59 Karl Martell, p. 60/61 Aachen, Kupferstich, p. 62/63 Bonifatius, p. 64 Otto d. Große, p. 65 Otto III., p. 67 Dom Magdeburg, p. 70 Anselm von Canterbury, p. 75 Kreuzritter, p. 81 Bartolome de Las Casas, p. 82 Jakobsbruder, p. 84 Landung Kolumbus, p. 85 Kolumbus, p. 86 Antijüd. Aufstand Ffm., p. 87 Judenvertreibung Spanien, p. 103 Industrialisierung, p. 107 Jeanne d'Arc, p. 107 Thesenanschlag, p. 111 Gutenbergbibel, p. 113 Türken in Konstantinopel, p. 116/117 30jähriger Krieg, p. 117 Galileo Galilei, p. 118 Isaac Newton, Milton bei Galilei, p.120/121 Waterloo, Novalis, p. 123 Friedrich II. u. Voltaire, p. 124/125 Ständekarikatur, 1. Koalitionskrieg, Sturm auf Bastille, p. 126/127 Wiener Kongreß, Waterloo, Kongreß-Karikatur, p. 130/131 William Wilberforce, Sklavenkauf, Überfall afrik. Dorf, p. 132/133 Kinderspeise-anstalt, p. 135 Deutscher Zollverein, p. 139 Henri Dunant, p. 144/145 Truppentransport 1914, gefallener Soldat, frz. Ambulanzwagen, p. 146 Kinder im KZ, p. 159 Miguel de Cervantes, Ludwig van Beethoven, Marie Curie, Rembrandt, August Strindberg, Béla Bartók, p. 160 W.A. Mozart, Søren A. Kierkegaard, William Shakespeare, Maria Theresia, Henrik Ibsen, Jan Sibelius, Isaac Newton.

Bildarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz: Titel: Kaiser Karl, Martin Luther, p. 10/11 Raub Europa, p. 21 Thomas S. Eliot, p. 26 Frachtschiffe, p. 38/39 Justinian, p. 46/47 Martin von Tours, p. 52 Corpus iuris civile, p. 53 Justinian, p. 54/55 Krönung, p. 58 Karl der Große, p. 59 Königsthron, p. 61 Harun al-Raschid, p. 68 Erasmus, Mauritius, p. 72/73 Europa-Karte 1580, p. 73 Kolumbus, p. 76/77 Kreuzfahrermanuskript, p. 78 Konrad III., p. 81 Historia de Las Indios, p. 88/89 Universität Bologna, p. 98 Wilhelm von Humboldt, p. 100/101 Kopernikus-Weltbild, Luther, p. 104/105 Familie im Mittelalter, p. 106 Erasmus von Rotterdam, p. 108/109 Melanchthon, Bartholomäusnacht, p. 110 Gutenberg, p. 114 Russ. Doppeladler, Iwan III., p. 114/115 Ungarisches Parlamentsgbäude, p. 116 Prager Fenstersturz, Eroberung Magdeburgs, p. 125 Napoleon, p. 128 Johannes XXIII., p. 132 Wichern, p. 137 Karl Marx, p. 138/139 Gründung Rotes Kreuz, p. 147 Dresdner Engel 1945, p. 159 Luis de Camões, Antonin Dvoŕak, Georges Simenon, Virgil, Samuel Beckett, Jean Jaques Rousseau, p. 160 Edward Steichen, Blaise Pascal, Platon, J.W. von Goethe, Henryk Sienkiewicz.

Bundespresseamt: Titel und p. 150/151 Adenauer, Schuman, Hallstein, p. 6 Helmut Kohl, p. 9 Roman Herzog, p. 20 Charles de Gaulle, p. 36/37 Akropolis, p. 141 Adenauer, p. 152 Adenauer, de Gaulle, p. 153 Kohl, Mitterrand, p. 156 Kohl, Chirac, Santer, p. 157 Heuss, de Gasperi, Adenauer, p. 158 Willy Brandt.

Thiede, Carsten Peter: p. 2 Carsten Peter Thiede, p. 27 Via Appia, p. 31 Petronilla, Fragmente Evangelium, p. 32/33 Schriftsteller mit Griffel, Mithras-Schrein, p. 37 Arat, p. 41 Konstantin-Münze, p. 43 Tetrarchen, p. 44 Kaiserpalast Mailand, Konstantin-Basilika, p. 49 Augustinus, p. 51 Justinian, Goldmünze, p. 54 Karl der Große, p. 57 Bonifatius-Altar, p. 69 Mauritius-Statue, p. 71 Bonifatiuskapelle, Paderborn, p. 76 Jerusalem, Muristan-Viertel, Grabeskirche, Klagemauer, p. 77 Johanniter-Ritter, p. 79 Komturkirche, Nieder-Weisel, p. 83 Venedig, p. 92/93 Bologna, p. 94 Sokrates, Platon, p. 95 Bibliothek Oxford, p. 96/97 Universität Padua, p. 110 Shakespeare

Archiv Gerstenberg:	p. 136 Oktoberrevolution
Bundespostministerium:	p. 118 Briefmarke Marconi
DPA:	p. 149 Graf Coudenhove-Kalergi
Edition Gallimard, Paris:	p. 22/23 Tabularium Kapitol
Europäische Gemeinschaft:	p. 97 Erasmus-Rolle
Europäische Kommission:	p. 140/141 Jugend in Europa, p. 143 Schuman-Plan, p. 151 Europaparlament p. 154/155 Gruppenbild in Dublin
Gamma/Alexis Duclos:	p. 7 Bernard-Henri Lévy
Hansmann Bildarchiv:	p. 91 Philosophie u. sieben Künste
Harenberg:	p. 105 bürgerliche Familie 1895
Kaufmann, Hans-G.:	p. 82/83 Castrillo de los Polvares, Christusstatue, Santiago de Compostela
Röm.-Germ. Museum Köln:	p. 26 Röm. Reisewagen
Staatsgalerie Stuttgart:	p. 21 Rembrandt, Paulus im Gefängnis
Süddeutscher Verlag:	p. 151 Europarat 1950
Tony Stone Associates:	Titel: Mädchen

Published by
Press- and Information Office of the Federal Government
Welckerstraße 11, 53113 Bonn

Text and Conception
Carsten Peter Thiede

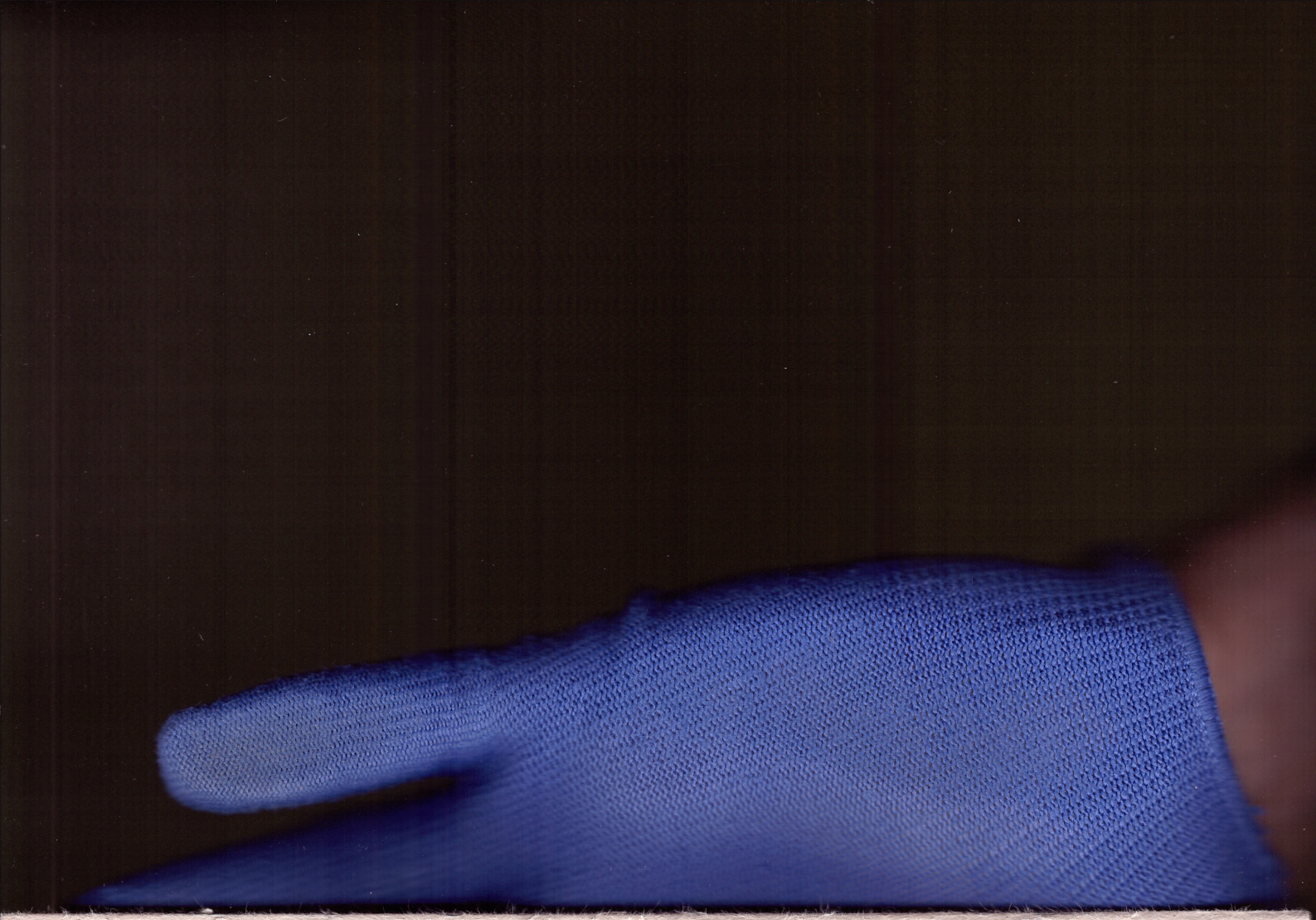
Design
Gratzfeld Werbeagentur, 50389 Wesseling

Lithography
Qualitho
Lithographie GmbH, 45134 Essen

Printed by
Gebr. Garloff GmbH, Druckerei & Verlag
39124 Magdeburg

Copy deadline December 1996

Printed on 100 % recycled paper.



Carsten Peter Thiede

We in Europe

Roots

Roads

Perspectives

Press- and
Information Office of
the Federal Government